AN OFFER OF Farther Help TO SUFFERING SAINTS: OR, *The best Work in the worst Times.*

WHEREIN

he *necessity*, *excellency*, and *means* of *preparation* for Sufferings are clearly evinced, and prescribed.

which, as in a Glass, the people of God may see how to dress themselves for Death, or any other Suffering to which the Lord shall call.

Added as an Appendix to the Sufferers Mirrour.

nd therefore, having your loynes girt about with Truth, and having on the Breast-plate of Righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, Ephes.6.14,15.

old I come as a Thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame, Rev.16.15.

lenti meliora sunt in votis, deteriora vero in expectatione, *Plut. de tranquil.*

avius est vulnus quod non expectatur, & illa ægrius tollerantur, quibus homo se non prius assuefacit, *Aug.*

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OPER

Tinker Help

The Epiſtle to the Reader.

Chriſtian Reader,

TRuth is the proper object of the Underſtanding; which when ſanctified, reliſhes Spiritual Truths with a ſtrange delight and pleaſure, Job 12. 11. *The ſoul in all its laborious reſearches and diſquiſitions (ſometimes climbing up from the Effects to the Cauſes, and ſometimes deſcending from the Cauſes to the Effects) is making enquiry after Truth.*

It racks and tortures it ſelf upon knotty Problems to find it out, and with vehement anhelations, and inſatiable longings, followes the pleaſant (though painfull) chaſe of Truth. All the objections, doubts, and ſcruples it meets with, are but the pauſes of a bivious and heſitateing ſoul, which is at a ſtand, not able to reſolve whether Truth lie on this ſide, or on that. And as its deſires are vehement in the purſuit of Truth, ſo is its joy proportionate in the acquiſition thereof. For no ſooner doth the Underſtanding diſcover it, but the ſoul runs to it as it were with open arms,

to embrace, hug, and welcome it. And though Truth be welcome in any dress to a soul that loves it for its native excellency, yet it may be clothed with such taking circumstances and considerations, as may commend it to the soul with greater advantage, and be to a truth what health is to a good feature, which enammels and sprinkles it over with a ravishing beauty.

Now amongst all those beautifying and endearing circumstances and considerations, that of seasonableness *is not the least. If it be a* present truth, *as the Apostle calls it* 2 Pet. 1.12. *it is for that the more gracefull and highly acceptable, because it bears upon the souls present occasions, and is of present use and service to it. Prov.*15.23. A word spoken in due season, how good it is?

Reader, under this great advantage (for I can bestow no other ornaments upon them) do the truths of Jesus, held forth in the following Treatise, present and commend themselves to thine acceptance. If therefore thou be an ingenuus [illegible], that lovest the Truth as it is in Jesus, thou wilt entertain these Truths in love, which make as seasonable an offer to assist and relieve thy soul engaged in this hour of temptation, as Joab *once did to* Abishai *in the day of battel,* 1 Chron.19.12. *It may possibly prove a costly Truth to thee; but be confident it will pay thee richly for its entertainment. That great Truth which in the following discourse is commended to thee, is the same which God is now preaching to all the world in a louder dialect by his present dreadfull dispensations. Say Reader, Do they not all with one mouth call upon us to prepare for fiery Trials? Is there not a dreadfull sound of approaching judgements in thine ears? and will they not be by so much the more sinking and intolerable,*

as

as they come by way of surprize upon thee? Expected evils are the more comportable. For look as expectation deflowreth any temporal enjoyment, and sucking out much of the sweetness of it beforehand, we find so much the less when we come to enjoy it; even so the expectation of evils abateth much of their dread and terrour. They seem not new or strange to a person that hath often conversed with them beforehand in his thoughts; and besides that, hath had the advantage of fortifying and preparing his spirit for them. When the Keepers Wife came running into Mr. Bradford's *Chamber, saying,* O *Mr.* Bradford! *I bring you heavy tidings, for to morrow you must be burned, your Chain is now buying, and presently you must go to* Newgate. *He put off his Hat, and looking up to Heaven, said,* O Lord, I thank thee for it, I have looked for this a long time: it comes not suddenly to me, the Lord make me worthy of it. *See in this example the rare advantage of preparation for sufferings.*

Believe it Reader, Sufferings are a very bitter Cup, and thou hadst need to provide some sweetning thing to drop into that Cup, that thou mayest be able to receive it with thanksgiving. And though it be true, that God may immediately do that for thee when he delivers it into thine hand, yet if thou neglect *his calls to thy* present duty, *thou hast no ground to* expect *such a mercy in thy* future streights. *It is an excellent thing for a Christian to prepare for trials, as if he expected no immediate assistance; and then when the trial comes so entirely to depend upon immediate assistance, as if he had made no preparation for it. It grieves my heart to see how the generality of the Professours of this Age are seized by a Spirit of slumber,*

* Mundus erseeus spatitur phantasias: Gerson.

and having got a soft Pillow of Creature-comforts under their heads, are fallen asleep, and * dream pleasant dreams of Halcyon golden dayes at hand, not considering what storms or tempests must usher in the glory of that day, nor making provision to grapple with the intercurrent difficulties that so nearly approach them, and are their next work. That God will appear in his glory to build up Sion. And that the New Jerusalem shall come down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a Bride for her Husband is no dream, but a most certain and comfortable truth, but that therefore it is needless for the Expectants of that day to make themselves ready for the worst of Sufferings; that they may ascend in a fiery Chariot into the glorious Kingdome above; not knowing whether ever they may live to see this New Jerusalem come down to them: this I say is a dream which will be of ill use to the Saints, except the Lord seasonably awake them out of it. If this spirit of slumber, which our Lord Mat. 25. hath fore-shewen shall fall even upon the Virgin Churches at the last dayes, have not invaded thee, but thou standest with Habakkuk upon thy Watch-Tower, expecting and fitting thy self for a day of greater temptation and trouble; such a discourse cannot but be welcome to thee, and thou wilt bless God for affording thee any help in so important an affair as this is. Thou art not at all the nearer death for laying thy head voluntarily upon the Block, God can provide himself another sacrifice, and yet accept thy readiness to suffer for him as if thy blood had been actually shed. This will reflect much honour upon Jesus Christ in the sight of the world, to whom it will hereby appear, that there is a reality in godliness, and that you do indeed descry something beyond these present visible enjoyments, that in-

infinitely preponderates and excells them all. And as Christ will be magnified, so a double benefit will hence result to thy self. Hereby thou wilt gain peace in thy spirit, and a proof of thy spirit. Peace of spirit in dayes of confusion and perplexity is no small mercy. This is ordinarily the effect and reward of a wise and provident preparation for them, I trembled in my self, that I might rest in the day of trouble, Hab. 3. 16.

And this will also give thee a proof of thy spirit. Upon this account (Christian) they may be the best days that ever thou sawest. Now thou mayest discover not onely the truth but the strength of thy graces; being called unto some high points of self-deniall for Christ. For look as self-love is not onely a sin, but the measure of all other sins, so self-deniall is not onely a grace, but the true measure and touch-stone of all thy graces. Now in order to thy attainment of this blessed and choice frame of Spirit, the eying of such examples as these cannot but be of singular use. Here you have a Cloud of Witnesses. And the Cloud encompasseth you round. Turn which way you will, you may find something in them parallel to your case. Oh what cause have the Saints of this Age, to bless the Lord for such rare Advantages. We that live in the last Times, have the best helps.

But certainly, our applause and commendation of them, is not all the use that God expects you should make use of them, but that you should be followers of them, who through Faith and patience inherits the Promises; and that you take them for an example of suffering affliction and of patience, Heb. 6. 12. Jam. 5. 10. It's storied of great Tamberlain, that he never went into the Field, but he

would carry the Lives of his Ancestors with him, which he would always reade ere he gave Battail, to rouze his Courage, that he might not stain their Noble Blood by his Cowardize: And had you but the skill to improve such Examples as these, you would find a singular advantage thereby, when you come to be tryed in like manner. I would have you look upon all these Worthies, as so many Souldiers returning from the Field with Victory and Honour, and the several Graces in which they excelled, as so many Swords and Shields, by which they atchieved their glorious Conquests: but all taken from the Tower of *David*, built for an Armory, whereon there (still) hang a thousand Bucklers, all Shields of mighty men, *Cant.* 4. 4. *They have now put off their Armour of* War, *and put on their Armour of* Light, *not to fight, but triumph in: if ever you hope to be fetched off the Field in Triumph as they were, and wear the Crown of Victory as they do, then go to this Tower of* David, (i. e.) *take from Christ these Shields of the Mighty, and learn the use of your Spiritual Weapons as they did. And see that you learn these Lessons from such glorious Paterns, and Precedents.*

1. *Learn by this to obviate the scandal of singularity, which Satan and his Agents would fasten upon you, and your sufferings. Say not as* Elijah, *I am left alone; nor yet as the Church in Captivity, Was ever sorrow like my sorrow? Certainly, you are not alone in your sufferings for Christ, here is store of good company in the suffering way with you.* Oh think not strange of fiery Trials, as though some strange thing had happened to you, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9.

2. *Learn by this to despise the shame that may attend your sufferings, be not ashamed of the Chain and*

Cross

Cross of Christ. See here how those that were the glory of the Ages, they lived in suffering more vile and ignominious things than you do, and yet reckoned it their glory. So did the Apostles, when they went from the presence of the Council rejoycing, ὅτι κατηξιώθησαν ἀτιμασθῆναι, that they were honoured, to be dishonoured for Christ.

3. Learn from hence to checque that nicence and unbecoming delicacy of spirit, which effeminates, melts, and softens your spirits. When Flesh reluctates at sufferings, and saith, How wilt thou be able to endure such hardships, or suffer such Torments, say as Elijah, Am I better then my Fathers? What better than such Saints as these, who have patiently suffered as hard things as can befall me?

4. Learn hence to shake off despondency and faintness of Spirit, when the greatest sufferings approach you. Say not they are invincible, impassable. See here how the Enemy with whom you are now to grapple and enter the Lists, hath been beaten hand to hand, how poor Women and Children have triumphed over him. And why may not you be as victorious in the strength of Christ as they were? They were men of like passions with you, they had the same temptations and corruptions with you, all troubled with a busie Devil, and complaining of a busie Devil as well as you; and you have the same Master, Spirit, Promises, and Rewards with them. Oh therefore rouze up your Courage, and play the Men.

5. Lastly, learn hence to scare your selves unto your Duty, and tremble at the thoughts of Apostacy. Fear least this Cloud of Witnesses should rise up to condemn thee in that great day, if thou now follow them not. O beloved, it will be sad to have so many Witnesses as these are, to give testimony against you before the Lord.

Thus

Thus you see how these Examples may subserve the design and end of this Discourse of preparation for sufferings. Now the good Lord give thee an heart to know what a price is in thy hand, and to improve such choice helps as these, that thou mayst be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Farewel.

ACT. 21.

ACT. 21. 13.

Then Paul *answered, What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? for I am ready, not to be bound onely, but also to die at* Jerusalem, *for the Name of the Lord Jesus.*

THE several motions of the Apostles were guided by the special direction of the Holy Ghost. They could not go where sometimes they had a mind to go, but where the Spirit pleased to direct and carry them, *Act.* 16. 6, 7. At this time *Paul* stood engaged by the special direction of the Spirit, to go to *Jerusalem*, Act. 20. 22. *And now behold, I go bound in the Spirit to* Jerusalem, *not knowing the things that shall befall me there.* [bound in the Spirit] It's an allusion, as some conceive, to a prisoner, that is bound with Cords, and carryed away by a potent Conquerour: Or, as others, to the Watery Vapours, which are bound up in the Clouds, and carryed by the Wind, according to the motion of the Clouds. Even so, was the Spirit of this Holy Man effectually subdued and determined to his Duty, notwithstanding the hazards attending it, that he could no more keep himself back from his duty, to which the Spirit so strongly impell'd him, than a man that is wedged in with a Crowd can chuse but move as it moves. So powerfully doth the Spirit of the Lord,

by

by his convictions and secret perswasions, subdue and determine the Spirits of the Saints to the Work God hath to do by them, *Jer.* 20. 9. *Act.* 4. 20.

And it was well that the Will of God, concerning this dangerous Journey to *Jerusalem*, was so convincingly revealed unto *Paul*: For shortly after he met with three strange Rubs in his way, able to have stagger'd any man that had not an extraordinary degree of clearness and satisfaction in his own Spirit.

The first was from the Disciples at *Tyre*, who pretending to speak to *Paul* by the Spirit, said unto him, *that he should not go up to* Jerusalem, *Act.* 21. 4. The Lord by this trying the Spirit of his Apostle, much as he did the young Prophet coming from *Judah* to *Bethel*, 1 *King.* 13. 18.

Shortly after this, he met with another great discouragement at *Cæsarea*, where *Agabus* (whom *Dorotheus* saith was one of the 72 Disciples, and had before propheſied of the Famine in the time of *Claudius*, which accordingly came to pass) he takes *Paul*'s Girdle, and binding his own hands and feet with it, said, *Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the* Jews *at* Jerusalem *bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the* Gentiles, *Act.* 21. 11. And he well enough knew, what the rage and malice both of the one and other against him was, and what he must expect, if ever he fell into their hands.

And then lastly, he meets with a greater discouragement and pull-back then any of the former, even that passionate storm of affection and love wherewith his Friends assault him, begging him with tears to decline that Journey. Oh they could not give up such a Minister as *Paul* was, and therefore

fell upon him with their pathetical Entreaties, and multitudes of Tears, which even melted him down, and almost brake his heart.

Whence, by the way, you may note, that we cannot judge our selves discharged from any service by God, becaus we meet with strange hinderances, and gross providences in our way. Divine *Precept*, not *Providence*, is to rule out our way of Duty. Never man met with sorer set-backs and remora's then *Paul* here did; but notwithstanding all this, being fully satisfied, it was the Lords will he should accomplish that service at *Jerusalem*, he resolutely breaks through all those intercurrent difficulties, with this heroick and truly Christian Resolution in the Text, *I am ready not to be bound onely, but to die at* Jerusalem *for* Christ.

The words consist of two general parts.

1. *Paul*'s loving and gentle rebuke of the peoples inordinate and unseasonable sorrow for his departure, τί ποιεῖτε. What do ye? Or, as it's render'd, What mean ye? Pray forbear your tears, restrain your unruly passion; if you continue thus, I shall not die at *Jerusalem* for Christ indeed, you'l break my heart here. The words in the *Greek* are emphatical, συνθρύπτοντες, *comminventes*, breaking it all to pieces, crumbling it into dust. Oh what a temptation was this? but it moved him not from his purpose. They had even *broken*, but could not *divert* his heart from the Work of the Lord.

2. The Considerations or Argument he useth to quiet them, *For I am ready*, ἑτοίμως ἔχω. I am in a ready posture, fitted for the Work, be it a *Prison*, or be it *Death*. Liberty is a dear thing, the very Birds of the Air had rather be in the Woods with their liberty, though lean and hungry, than in a Golden Cage with the best attendance, saith one. But I am

fitted

fitted for Bonds, ſaith *Paul*. Nay, that's not all, but I am ready alſo to *die* at *Jeruſalem*. To part with life is the higheſt point of Self-denial, becauſe all lower Self-Intereſts in the World, are as it were twiſted with, and wrapt up in this Intereſt of Life. He that is ready to deny his life for Chriſt, is alſo ready to ſacrifice all other, even his deareſt enjoyments for him alſo, becauſe theſe are all wrapt up in Life: Yet for this he profeſſeth to them he was ready.

But what was in this to ſatisfie them whoſe trouble it was to ſee him ſo forward: Why there are three things hereby ſuggeſted to them, in order to the calming of their ſpirits.

1. In this they might ſee a Divine Hand that had been at work upon his heart, fitting it thus for that ſervice: for certainly fleſh and blood could not produce this: And if it were of God, there was reaſon enough for them to be quiet, and not ſtrive againſt God: For there is nothing in the World will ſooner ſtill and quiet a gracious Soul than this, to ſhew him how God hath ſignified his Will in the thing.

2. I am ready, my heart ſtands fully bent to *Jeruſalem*, and therefore you had as good be quiet, and ſatisfie your ſelves, for I am fixt and reſolved upon it: my Will is ſubdued to the obedience of the Divine Will in this thing: your Tears and Entreaties are all in vain, 'twill be but loſt labour.

3. As it would be in vain to them, he reſolving not to gratifie them in that, ſo it would be of very ill uſe to him. I am now ready (ſaith he) God hath fully ſatisfied my Soul in the thing: and not onely am I clear in this that it is my duty, but in a good meaſure I am fitted for it. I have overcome the Contradictions and Reluctations of the Fleſh, and

brought

brought my heart to a quiet submission to the Will of God. It is therefore as great a disservice as you can imagine to do me. Now to unfix and disorder my heart again, by casting such Temptations as these in my way, and by your tempting Tears to make the flesh rebel, and the Enemy that is within to renew its opposition.

Thus you see the equipage and preparation of *Paul*'s Spirit for Christ's service at *Jerusalem*. And as this was not a bravado before he saw the Enemy, but real and in earnest, appears by his acting full up to this his noble Resolution, when it came to the tryal, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7. So that it was a very glorious and excellent Spirit, by which he did exceedingly glorifie the Lord: and this readiness of Spirit was of singular use also to himself, for this enabled him to break his way through the many and strange hinderances and discouragements that he met withall in that Journey.

Now though the Text be pregnant, with many excellent and useful Notes, yet the main Point that I level at is this.

DOCT.

That it is a blessed and excellent thing for the people of God to be ready for the hardest services, and worst sufferings, to which the Lord may call them.

This is that which every gracious heart is reaching after, and aiming at, but how few attain it? Certainly, there are not many that can say as *Paul* here did, *I am ready to be bound, or die.*

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Shews that God doth ſometimes call his People to difficu ſervices, and great ſufferings; with a ſhort accou how, and why he ſo calls them.

IT muſt be granted, that the tenderneſs and com paſſions of our God over his people are exceed ing great, *Pſal.* 103. 13. and yet this tenderneſs o God over them, exempts them not from grievou ſufferings in this World, *Heb.* 12. 6. *Seneca* (thoug an *Heathen*) could ſay, *That God loves his peopl with a maſculine love, not with a womaniſh indulgenc and tenderneſs.* He loves them with a *Father's*, bu not with a *fond* affection. If need require, they ſhall be in *heavineſs*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. and he had rather their hearts ſhould be *heavy* by *adverſity*, than *haughty* and vainly elated by *proſperity*. The *choiceſt* ſpirits have been exerciſed with the *ſharpeſt* ſufferings: and thoſe that now ſhine as the *Stars* in *Heaven*, have been trod under foot as *Dung* on *Earth*. What precious and excellent men were the Apoſtles! they were the light and glory of the World, like Diamonds among the common Pebbles of the World; and yet what vile and ignominious uſage had they from the World? *Unto this preſent hour* (ſaith *Paul*) *we both hunger, and thirſt, and are naked, and buffeted, and have no certain dwelling places, and labour working with our hands: Being reviled, we bleſs; being perſecuted, we ſuffer it; being defamed, we intreat; we are made as the filth of the World, and the Off-ſcouring of all things unto this day*, 1 Cor. 4. 11, &c. The *Greek* words have an emphaſis, alluding to a Jumbril or Wheel-Barrow, that's drawn up

and

down the Streets, into which all the filth of the
And in *Heb.* 11. 35. you have no less then nine
of cruel sufferings and tortures, to which mul-
of the precious Servants of Christ were ex-
And others were tortured, not accepting deli-
verance; that they might obtain a better Resurrection;
others had Trials of cruel Mockings, yea, more
Bonds and Imprisonments: they were stoned, they
were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the
sword; they wandered about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-
skins, being afflicted, destitute, tormented; of whom the
world was not worthy; they wandered in Deserts, and
in Mountains, in Dens, and Caves of the Earth.
And since the Earth had dryed up those Rivers
precious blood, whereof the sacred Records
mention, what fresh Streams have again dis-
coloured it? *Historiographers* inform us, that du-
ring the Ten Primitive Persecutions, so many of
the Saints and Martyrs of Jesus have been slain, as
that you may allow five thousand a day to every day
in the whole Year. And since the *Jesuits* arose out
of the bottomless Pit, they give us an account of
eight hundred thousand, that were inhumanely
massacred in the space of 30 years. In the *French*
Massacre Thirty Thousand Protestants cut off in 30
days. *Farnesius* vowing he would ride his Horse up
to the Bridle in the Blood of *Lutherans*. Those pre-
cious Servants of Christ the *Waldenses* and *Albingen-*
ses who received the Light of Reformation about
the Year 1260. when the Foggs of Antichristian
Darkness had over-spread the Earth; a people of a
sound Judgment in the Doctrine of the Gospel, as
appears by their *Letters*, *Catechisms*, *Confessions*,
which are extant: Especially that excellent *Decla-*
ration of their Faith, published for the satisfaction of

See the Hist. of the *Waldenses*, translated by *Simpson Leonard*, p. 85.

the Reformed Churches in the Year, 1603. a people of a ſimple, plain, and inoffenſive behaviour: Yet what dreadful and unparallel'd ſufferings have they been expoſed to for near 500 years ſpace. In *Calabria Alexandria* (to whom Pope *Pius* gave the charge of the Perſecution) drave them out of their Houſes into the Woods and Mountains, except the aged and children, that could not flee, whom they murthered in the way, purſuing the reſt like Wild Beaſts, and ſlaying Multitudes of them. Thoſe that could recover the Mountains, being on the height of the Rocks, intreated for their lives, beſeeched their Perſecutors to pity their Wives and Children, to remember how holily, and blamelesly they had lived among them; beſeeching them, for the Lords ſake, to permit them to betake themſelves, either by Sea or Land, to the protection of God, offering to leave their Towns and Eſtates to them: But the perſecution was commanded to go on, the Souldiers purſuing them through the Woods and Mountains, crying *Amaſſa, Amaſſa*, that is, Kill, kill. Thoſe that got into Caves, and Cleſts of the Rocks, there periſhed through Famine; and thoſe that were taken alive, moſt inhumanely tortured: Some put upon the Rack for eight hours together; others being ſtripped quite naked, were beaten with Iron Rods, and afterwards drawn through the Streets, and burnt with Fire-brands: Eighty of them had their Throats cut one after another, as a *Butcher* doth his Muttons; and being each divided into four Quarters, were ſet upon ſtakes all along the *Road* betwixt *Montald* and *Villar*, for the ſpace of 30 Miles: Others thrown from the Top of an high Tower, and broken to pieces, among which, one *Sampſon*, a godly young man, lived for ſome hours after the fall in miſerable extremity, implo-

ring

God for Mercy. The Vice-Roy passing by, hearing him so groan out his desires to God, gave him a kick on the Head with his Foot, saying, *This Dog yet alive? Throw him to the Hogs.* And thus were these dear Servants of God used, till they were utterly destroyed and exterminated out of *Calabria.*

The like bloody Persecutions befel them in the Valleys of *Dauphine, Pragella, Fassiniere,* but especially in the Valley of *Loyse*, where all the Inhabitants, amounting to the number of 30000. fled from their Habitations, upon the approach of their Enemies, to the *Clefts* and *Caverns* of the Neighbouring Rocks and Mountains, whither their Persecutors pursued them; and setting on fire great quantities of wood at the Mouthes of those *Caverns*, that many were forced to leap out, and cast themselves head-long upon the Rocks below, where they were broken to pieces; the rest were stifled within the *Caverns*, amongst which were found 400 little Infants, dead in their Cradles, or in the Arms of their dead Mothers; besides their late bloody *Massacres* by that inhumane *Duke de Alva.*

But it is enough, by this little taste, and indeed but a *taste* of their grievous sufferings, you may see what hard things Gods dearest Children have been exercised with. And what he hath done, he may do again. Are we better then our Fathers? Nay, how short do we come, and with what unequal pace do we follow these glorious examples of faith, love, simplicity, and mortification? Or can we imagine the rage of Satan to be abated, now that his Kingdome hastens to its period, *Revel.* 12. 12. It's confest, God doth not call all his people to the same *kinds* or *degrees* of sufferings; All have not a *Martyrs* faith, and all shall not have a Martyrs fire; The

Isa. 28. 27. God that instructeth the Husbandman to beat out the *Fitches* with a staffe, and the Cummin with a rod, and not to turn the Cart wheel upon the lesser and more tender Grain, will exactly proportion his peoples trials to his peoples strength, *For he is a God of judgement*, Isa. 30. 18. but notwithstanding this, it still remains a truth as much as ever, *that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 12.

Augustine thinks that the bloody sweat which over-run the body of Christ in the Garden, signified the sharp and grievous suffering which in his mystical body he should afterwards endure. It is a truth, that these are also called *the sufferings of Christ*, Col. 1. 24. and there are yet *remnants* of them *ὑστερήματα*, his personal sufferings were compleated at his Resurrection, and are fully full; he poured out blood enough to fill that Cup to the brim; by the *former* the wrath of God was fully quenched and satisfied, but the *latter* cannot satisfie the wrath of man. Notwithstanding the lives of millions of precious Saints have gone for it, in his Cause and Quarrel, whose souls are crying under the *Altar*, How long, Lord? how long? Yet there are many more coming on behind in the same Path of Persecution, and much more of that bloody work is to be done before the mystery of God be finished. And though the Church have sometimes its *lucida intervalla*, yet the Clouds return again after the Rain. *Cain's club* (as *Buchholcer* saith) is still carried up and down the world stained with the blood of *Abel*. Thus you see to what hard things God hath called his people.

How God calls to sufferings. Now God may be said to call forth his people to suffer, when he so *hedgeth* them in by providence, that there is no way to escape it but by sin. Whatsoever

ever providence labours with such a *dilemma* as this, is a plain signification of Gods will in the case. We may not now expect such an extraordinary call to suffering-work, as some of the Saints had of old, *Gen.* 22.2. *Acts* 9.16. but when we meet them in the way of our duty, and there is no avoiding of them, but by stepping over the hedge of the command, God will have us to look upon that *exigence* as his call to suffer.

Why he calls his people to such grievous sufferings.

And the reasons why he doth so often hedge them in thus by his providence in a suffering path, and bring them to these exigencies, may be drawn partly from his own *Glory*, which is thereby singularly *illustrated*, and partly from his peoples *good*, which is also thereby strangely promoted and carried on.

By these Sufferings (albeit Satan, and his Instruments think not so) doth the most Wise God illustrate and advance his own glory. For,

Thereby he vindicates his Righteousness, not onely in making good the Promises to his people under them, and so silencing all their unbelieving fears and jealousies, *Micah* 6.5. but he vindicates it also from the aspersions, and false imputations of his enemies; by this the world shall see, that how well soever he loves his people, yet he will not indulge or patronize their sins. If they will be so *disingenuous* to sin against him, he will be so *just* to make them suffer for their sin, and in those sufferings will provide for his glory, which by their sin was prejudiced in the eyes of the world, *Amos* 3.2. *Ezra* 9.13,15. He hates not sin a jot the less, because it is found in his own people; and though for the *magnifying* of his *mercy*, he will pardon their sin, yet for the *clearing* of his *Righteousness* he will *take vengeance upon their inventions*, Psal. 99.8.

2. And in these sufferings his glorious *Power* hath an opportunity to shine forth also, and that both in their *supportations* under trouble, and *deliverances* out of it. It is one of the greatest wonders in the world, how the Church subjects under such violent Assaults, as are frequently made upon it, *I will turn aside* (said *Moses*) *and see this great sight, why the Bush is not consumed*, Exod. 3. 3. But especially in its marvellous *deliverances*, which the power of God often effects so strangely, that it overmatches the spirits of Gods own people, and their souls like a Watch wound up above its height, stands still with amazement and admiration, *Psal.* 126. 1. *When the Lord turned back the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed.*

3. His Wisdome is triumphant in these dayes of Distress and trouble. Now you may see the Allwise God going beyond a subtile Devil, and in a moment frustrating the deepest and most desperate Designs of Hell, and that at the very birth and article of Execution, *Hest.* 6. 1. sometimes effecting their Deliverances immediately by his own hand, *Zech.* 4. 6. *Exod.* 15. 6. *Hos.* 1. 7. to the end he may be exalted in his own Strength, *Psal.* 21. 12, 13. for he affects not *Social Glory.*

Sometimes, by contemptible and improbable means, out-witting an *Ahithophel*, by a plain *Hushai*, *Haman* by *Hester*, *Sisera* by *Jael*.

Yea sometimes by *dreadful* means, I mean such as rather threaten his peoples Ruine, then seem to promise their Deliverance, *Psal.* 65. 5. The fiery Furnace, the Lions Den, the Belly of a Whale, are strange means of preservation.

And as Divine Wisdome is glorified in the way and manner of their deliverance out of trouble, so in ordering those troubles to their singular benefit and advantage. For,

1. They

1. They are ordered to be the occasions of drawing out the *magnificent Acts* of your *Faith* and *Patience*, which else could not shew themselves to the world as now they do. There are the *Ordinary* and common Acts of Faith, and there are its *Magnificent* and *Heroick* Acts; that is, its Resolute and High-raised Actings, by which it *triumphs* over greatest Difficulties, and enables the soul courageously to break down all the Difficulties that lie before him in the way of his Duty. Such were those of *Hester*, *Job*, and *Daniel*, *Hest.* 4.16. *Job* 13.15. *Dan.* 6.10. When this holy Gallantry of Spirit appears in Believers, God is exceedingly glorified. Poor timerous low-spirited Saints, like young Swimmers, are afraid to venture farther then they can feel Ground (I mean some sensible Encouragement) under their feet; but these can cast themselves into the Sea of Troubles upon a naked Promise. From these Trials of Faith God hath a great Revenue of Glory, 1 *Pet.* 1.7. and these could not appear in the world, were it not for such Troubles, *Revel.* 13.16. *Here is the Faith and the Patience of the Saints.*

2. They are wisely ordered as means of *severing* and *discriminating* the Spirits of Professors. By this means the Church is disburthened and rid of many Hypocrites, which were its Reproach as well as Burthen, *Amos* 9.9,10. *I will sift the house of Israel among all Nations, like as Corn is sifted in a Sieve, yet shall not the least Grain fall upon the Earth. All the sinners of my people shall die*, &c. All the heterogeneous Stuffe that mingles, and embases the more pure and noble Metal, shall be separated in this Furnace. In Times of Peace Professors multiply apace; the Sun-shine of Prosperity breeds Professors, as an hot Summer doth Flies, though

Heaven will be little the fuller for this strange multiplication of them: And this I suppose is the ground of that saying, *That it's never better with the Church, then when it hath most Hypocrites in it.* But now Persecution like a windy day causes all this rotten Fruit to fall. *Lightning* and *Thunder* is terrible weather, but it purifies and cleanseth the Air. Some of these seem to be very beautiful Flowers in the Field of the Church, where they stand (during the Sun-shine of Peace) in the Pride and Bravery of their Professions and Gifts; *but the wind passeth over them and they are gone, and their places shall know them no more.* To allude to that in *Psa.* 103.16.

3. As God makes them *separating* Times in respect of Hypocrites, so are they Times of *endearing* the Saints to each other. Never are Saints more *endeared*, then when most *persecuted*: never more *united*, then when most *scattered*. Though in Times of Liberty they will *bite* and *devour* one another, yet under common Persecution they will die one for another. You have two pregnant instances of this, *Acts* 43. 2. *Mal.* 3. 17. Certainly there is something that is engaging, in *fellowship* in the same Sufferings. But there is much more in the *discoveries* that Persecution makes of their sincerity, which it may be was before entertained with jealousie. And there is yet more, in the *reproofs* of the Rod, whereby they are taught the evil of their former wayes, and made to cry, as *Psal.* 79. 8. *O remember not against us former iniquities.*

4. By these Storms they are awakened to their Duty, and taught to cry more fervently. Ah! what drowsie Prayers? what heartless Devotions are presented to God sometimes? But now, they cry as the Disciples to Christ, when ready to sink in the Storm, *Isa.* 26, 16. *O Lord, in trouble they have visited thee;*

there they have poured out a Prayer when thy chastning was upon them. Now they pray more humbly, frequently, fervently. Musick they say is sweetest upon the Waters; I am sure the sweetest Melody is made by the Saints upon these Waters of Trouble.

These few Hints may suffice to shew you the admirable Fruits which God aims at in exercising his people under afflictions, and what one of these singly may not preponderate all the smart and pain they cost you. And thus you see that God doth, as also how, and why he doth call forth his people to such hard *Sufferings.*

CHAP. II.

Demonstrating the Excellency of a prepared Heart, for the worst of Sufferings.

NOw to evince the Choiceness and Excellency of a ready and prepared Spirit to entertain, and chearfully obey a call from God to the greatest Sufferings, thereby to set an edge upon your Desires, and quicken your Endeavours after it; be pleased to ponder these following Particulars, wherein much of its Excellency will appear.

1. It will bring the heart to an holy Rest and Quietude in a Suffering hour, and so prevent that Anxiety and perturbation of Spirit, which puts the sinking weight into Affliction. The more Care, Fear, and Trouble thou hast before a Trouble comes, the more Calm, Quiet, and Composed thy Spirit will be when the Affliction is come indeed. It is admirable to consider with what peace and holy submission *Job* entertain'd his Troubles, which considering the kind and *quality* of them, together with

with the *manner* in which they befell him, one would think they should (at least) have startled and amazed him, and put his Soul (though gracious) into a strange Confusion: But you see the contrary, he is very quiet and composed in his Spirit, little Tumult or Disorder appears in his Thoughts, but he worships God, owns his Hand, and submits to his Will, *Job* 1.20,21. Whence was this? Surely had they come by way of *Surprize*, as holy as he was he could not have carried it thus; but he had in the dayes of his Peace and Prosperity prepared for such a Day as this, and so they neither came unexpectedly, nor found him unprepared for them, *Job* 3.25,26. *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, yet trouble came.* The thing which he *feared* (as he saith there) *came upon him.* He laid it to heart before it came, and therefore it neither brake nor distracted his heart when it came.

So *Habakkuk* he stood upon his Watch-Tower, *i. e. recessum mentis*, saith Mr. *Calvin*; his own retiring Thoughts, making Observations from the Word upon probable Events. Yea, and seeing a Storm of Judgement gathering in the Clouds of the Threatnings, he trembled in himself before it fell, *Cap.*3.16,17. And see what advantage this was of to him, *Vers.*17.18. he had *Rest* in the Day of Trouble; yea could *rejoyce*, when all outward Staves and comforts were gone. There is a double Rest in the Day of Evil; a Rest of *Deliverance*, and a Rest of *Contentation*; it was this later that this holy man enjoyed in that Evil Day, and that as the consequent of his serious Preparation.

But now if Troubles come by way of surprisal, How *amazing* and *ruining* do they often prove? 'Tis a sad thing to feel Trouble before we see it, and to be past *hope* before we have any *fear*. Those Troubles

lies (saith one) that find men *secure*, do usually leave them *desperate*. What advantage hath that Enemy to ruine you, that comes upon your back, and falls upon you unawares? This is the misery of the careless World. *For Man also knoweth not his time, as the Fishes that are taken in an evil Net; and as the Birds that are caught in the snare, so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil time, when it falleth on them suddainly*, Eccles. 8. 12. Thus perished the old World; But one *Noah* provided for the Flood, and onely he with his Family preserved in it; all the rest were *eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in Marriage, till the Flood came and swept them all away*, Matth. 24. 38. Men will not use their fore-seeing Faculties; but because it's all well, yet therefore they conclude it shall be so to morrow. *Philosophers* tell us, that immediatly before an *Earth-quake*, the Air is very quiet and serene; and before the great Rain falls, the Wind usually lies. We may not conclude Rest and Peace from the Report our Senses make to us, from the posture of second Causes, (and yet what is there, look which way you will, but speaks Troubles and Distresses coming upon the World) but rather we should make a Judgment from the Word, upon condition of the Times; for there you have the Decrees of God, and a Draught of the Designs of Providence, to the end of the World, *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2. Here you may see *the Signs of the Times*, and what days are to be expected. And then, if you can upon this fore-sight, get into your *Ark* before the *Cataracts* of Heaven be opened, and the Sea-Shores unbar'd, and the Waters prevail above the Mountains; Oh what a benefit will this be! how mayst thou sit (*Noah* like) *medius tranquillus in undis*! Safe from the fear of evil, and enjoy rest and peace in thy own spirit,

Spirit, when the Earth is full of Uproars, Tumults, and Desolations.

2. It is a blessed and excellent thing to prepare for sufferings, because such preparations do plainly speak a truly gracious heart, that is in earnest with Christ, and is serious in the matters of Religion. Believe it Soul, this one thing will be the clearest discovery of the integrity of thy heart in profession. He that makes account of sufferings, and is seriously at work upon his own heart, to fit it for sufferings, and take his Lot with Christ where ever it falls, this is the man that hath deliberately closed with Christ upon his own terms, and is like to be the durable Christian.

As for Hypocrites (Christs Summer-Friends) they have either their Exceptions and secret Reservations, to secure a Retreat, if ever it come to hot service, or else they rush inconsiderately into the profession of Christ, never examining the terms which he proposes to all that will follow him, nor sealing those Indentures, *Mark* 8. 34. upon which he onely allows us to call him Master.

The necessity of a rational and advised closure with Christ upon these terms, is by himself fully set forth in that excellent Parable, *Luke* 14. 25, 26, 27, 28. wherein consider, (1.) The occasion, *ver.* 25. *There were great Multitudes with him*, Christ began to grow in request among them, they flockt from all parts to him, to hear him; but Christ knew well enough, that if once they should come to understand their work, and what the Conditions and Terms of their admission into his service are, it would quickly thin and diminish that great multitude, and reduce that great Host like *Gideons*, into a little handful. (2.) And therefore he resolves candidly and plainly with them; and in *ver.* 26, 27. he

he propounds his Terms, and writes down his Conditions, the sum of which is this, *he must deny himself*, that is, at least *in præparatione animi*, in the preparation of the mind, if not actually: So that this is the Hinge upon which all our Profession turns, and the stress of the whole business lies. And (3.) to evince the rationality of his Terms, and that he expected no unreasonable thing at their hand, he clears it by a double instance, or resemblance, to what men use to do in other cases. (1.) That of a *Builder*, no man that exerciseth Reason will begin to build an House, and not be provided to defray the Charge of it: It were a ridiculous vanity, for a man to lay a large Foundation, and not have a stock to carry up the Walls, and compleat the Work. (2.) That of a *Souldier*, no man would with 10000. engage an Army of 20000. that would be *impar congressus*, an unequal Match indeed; what could he expect but to be overpowred with Numbers, and swallowed up? Possibly they may intend to *face*, but no man would think they intended to *fight* the Enemy on such a disadvantage.

Why thus stands the case, In our ingaging in the Profession of Christ, a man must sit down and compute the cost and charges of being a Christian, and deliberately weigh the worst, as well as the best; and having so done, if then he be content to run all hazards with Jesus Christ, and expects to save no more but his Soul, (for indeed he that thinks to save any thing but his Soul by *Religion*, is a Fool for so thinking) If I say, he be content to fore-go and hazard all the rest for Christ, and accordingly when dangers appear, and difficult times come on, doth in good earnest fit and make ready himself for the worst he can fore-see, why this is the man, that deals honestly with Christ, and is sincere, hearty,

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and realt in his Transactions with him. For want of this consideration at first, and suitable preparation from time to time, as need requires, and new troubles approach; I say, for want of this it is, that so many faint and fall back in the day of trouble, and furnish Hell with so many Tryumphs over Religion, and the sincere-hearted Professors of it. It was for want of *depth of Earth*, (*i. e.*) a deep consideration, and rooted Resolution at first, that the Stony-ground Hypocrite so quickly withered, when the Sun of Persecution began to shine fervently upon him, *Mat.* 13. 5, 6.

And wherefore is it think you? that God doth make such deep Wounds by Conviction upon mens hearts at first, and terrifie them with such dreadful Representations of their guilt, in the Glass of the Law, *Act.* 2. 37. *Rom.* 7. 9. Why surely, as God aims at the unbottoming of the Man by this, and striking him off that false and conceited Foundation of his own Righteousness, so he doth it to make Christs Terms and Conditions appear rational and easie to him, that being delivered out of that miserable state by Christ, he may never open his mouth grudgingly and repiningly against Christ, whatever Troubles he shall from thenceforward meet with for his sake, *Ezek.* 16. 63.

So that it must needs be a good proof and testimony, of the sincerity of our hearts, in the profession of Christ, when we thus fit our selves to suffer with him, and are content to bear his Cross, as well as wear his Crown: And is it not a blessed thing, for a man to find a fair Evidence of this in his own heart? What can be more comfortable to him on Earth?

3. This preparation is an excellent thing, because it's that which prevents and cuts off the scandal of

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the Cross, and the offence that others take at the sufferings of Christ.

Now, by Christs own Testimony, that Soul is blessed that is not offended in him, *Mat.* 11.6. And truly, there are not many among the Throng of Professors, upon whose Heads this blessing falls, how many in a suffering hour, are disguised as persons that have met with a disappointment? They expected much peace, honour, and prosperity, from Christ, as *Mat.* 20. 20, 21. but finding now their Expectations frustrated, and their Carnal Interests rather *exposed*, then *secured* by their profession of him, they go back like those, *Joh.* 6. 66. and walk no more with him. And it is very observable, that Christ dates the offence that men shall take at him, from the beginning of sorrows, *Mat.* 24. 8, 9. *All these are the beginning of sorrows, and then shall many be offended.* This is the beginning of Apostacy from Christ. But now if thou be one that makest it thy business, to fore-see and provide for Troubles before they come upon thee, this will prevent thy offence when they come, *Joh.* 16. 1, 2, 3, 4. Fore-sight of them takes off both the *strangeness* and *terrour* of them. *Great peace* (saith the *Psalmist*) *have they that love thy Law, and* [*nothing*] *shall* [*offend*] *them*; or, *be a stumbling block to them*, as it is in the *Heb.* No! Why they meet with Prisons, Death, Banishments, yea, but they shall not stumble or be offended at these things, but pass peaceably over them, because they meet with no more then they expected.

And is not this a blessed thing, think you, that whatever falls out in thy way shall not offend thee, or make any alteration on thy Judgment of Christ and his ways, but he shall be as lovely, and his ways as sweet and desirable under Persecution, Scorn, and

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Contempt, as in the greatest flourish of Prosperity? Yea, though thou be *broken in the place of Dragons, and covered with the shadow of Death, yet shall not thy heart be turned back, nor thy steps decline from his ways*, Psal. 44. 18, 19, 20. Why, this blessedness comes upon the heart of the prepared Christian.

3. A fourth Excellency of preparation for sufferings lies in this, that it hath a tendency to convince and awaken the secure and drowsie World. O! If the Lords people would but fall about this work in earnest, and live as people that are providing for a Storm, and resolved in the strength of God to run all hazards and hardships for Christ, I am perswaded it would be of more ease to startle and convince the World, then all the Sermons that ever they heard. For here is that which dashes and cuts the Throat of all our Labours; we preach up Self-denial and Contempt of Life and Liberty for Christ: Now though they hear us preach the necessity and excellency of these things, and here you profess them as your Principles; yet when they look upon the Lives of Professors in Times of Danger, and find no proportion betwixt your profession and practice, when they see you cling to the World, and are as loth to give it up as others; that Prisons and Sufferings are as formidable things to you as others, and that you live not loose from these things, as men that are in a preparedness to let them go, and give them up for Christ: Why then they conclude, that you dare not trust your own Principles when it comes to the push; and how can they be perswaded to believe, that which they think your selves do not really believe? They have *Eyes to see* what you can *do*, as well as *Ears* to *hear* what you can *say*; and as long as they see you do no more

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then others, you may talk your hearts out, e're they will believe your way is better than others.

But now when Persecution ariseth, did they see you providing your selves for it, and putting on your Harness to enter the Lists, carry your dearest Enjoyments in your hands, and put on the shooe of preparation, to follow the Lord through the roughest wayes of Sufferings: this would convince to purpose, and preach the excellency of Christ, the vanity of the Creature, the rationality and certainty of Christian Principles, in a more intelligible and rouzing Dialect to them, than all our cheap and false Commendations of them did. And hence it is, that *Noah* was said to condemn the World, *Heb.* 11. 7. *By Faith* Noah *being warned of God, of things not seen as yet,* (*i. e.*) of the Deluge that was coming, though no appearance of it yet, the Heavens being as clear as ever: yet believing the Threatning, *he was moved with fear*: the fear of God, an effect of his Faith in the Word of God, *moved,* (*i.e.*) impelled him to his Duty: Set him about his preparation-work, to provide an *Ark*; and this was it by which he *condemned the World*, left them excuseless: For they not onely heard of an approaching Flood by his Ministry, but now saw he himself believed what he preached, by his daily preparations against it came. O consider this, how much it would tend to the Worlds Conviction. Now they will see that you are in good earnest, and that there is a reality in godliness. This will induce them to search into the matter more then ever, and remove those prejudices they have taken up against the good ways of God, as if they were but *Phantasms* and Conceits.

5. In the next place, this fore-sight and preparation, must needs be an excellent thing, because

the Spirit of God every where sets an honourable Character upon it, and always mentions such persons with some singular commendation and respect. These onely are the Wise-men in the Judgment of God; and all the rest (what great Polititians soever they are famed to be among men) are accounted Fools, *Prov.* 22. 3. *Eccles.* 2. 14. *The Wise-mans Eyes are in his head*; that is, he is a foreseeing man; *but the Fool goes on and is punished*: Rushes on without consideration, suspecting no danger that he at present sees not, and so smarts for his folly. Beloved, there are *Signs of the Times*, as well as of the Weather, *Matth.* 16. 3. You may see the Clouds of Judgment gathering before the Storm falls upon you: And this is the meaning of *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2. *Gather your selves together, before the Decree bring forth, and the Day pass as the Chaff.* Where there is a *Conception* of Judgment, there will be a *Birth*, unless the Reformations and Prayers of the Saints give it a miscarrying Womb. But it requires Wisdom to discern this; they must be men of much observation, that can descry it at a great distance: yet this may be done, by considering what GOD hath done in like Cases in former Ages, when Nations have been guilty of the same sins as now they are: For God is as just now as then, and hates sin as much as ever he did; and partly, by attending to things *present*, to what fulness and maturity the sins of a Nation are grown, *Joel* 3. 16. or what *beginnings* of Judgment are already upon a people, as Harbingers and Fore-runners of more at hand, *Luke* 2. 20, 31. 1 *Sam.* 2. 12. Or what is the universal Vote and Cry of Gods Ministers, who are his Watch-men to fore-see danger, *Ezek.* 3. 17. and his Trumpeters to discover it, *Numb.* 10. 8. and when these have one mouth given, certainly there

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is much in it, *Luke* 1. 70. Or lastly, by pondering those Scripture-Prophecies that yet remain to be fulfilled: They must all go out their times, and accomplish their full number of Years and Moneths; but certainly they shall be fulfilled in their Seasons.

By attending to these things, a Christian may give a near guess at the Judgments that are approaching a Nation, and to order himself accordingly, *Eccles.* 8. 5. *A wise mans heart discerns both time and judgment.* And this is (even in the Judgment of God) a choice point of Wisdom. Whereas on the contrary, heedless and careless ones, that regard not these things, are branded for Fools, and upbraided with more brutishness than the Beasts of the Field, or Fowls of the Air, *Matth.* 16. 3. *Jer.* 8. 7. *The Stork in the Heavens,* the *Swallow, Turtle,* and *Crane,* observe their Seasons of departing, and returning, upon the approach of the *Winter* and *Spring,* and that by a natural instinct, whereby they prolong their lives, which else must perish. But though God hath made Man wiser then the Fowls of the Air, and Beasts of the Earth, which by instinct will quit colder Climates, or run to the Hedg when Winter or Storms approach, yet the Heavens may be astonished at this, to see Nature cast by sinne so far below it self, and that in reasonable Creatures.

But now, if this be fore-seen, then there is a singular advantage in a mans hand, either to use the means of preventing those approaching Calamities, *Zeph.* 2. 3. or if it cannot be prevented, yet to take Sanctuary in Christ, *Mic.* 5. 5. to run to the Promises and Attributes, *Esa.* 26. *ult.* and so have a good Roof over his Head while the Storm falls, and the Weather is tempestuous abroad. And

therefore certainly, this Preparation is an excellent thing. Whatever the Spirit of God ſpeaks in the commendation of fore-ſeeing Evils, is with reſpect to this Duty of preparing for them; for fore-ſight of Evils, without preparation, rather increaſes, then diminiſhes the miſery.

6. A ſixth Excellency of Preparation, lies in the influence that it hath into a Chriſtians ſtability in the evil day. You cannot but know, that your ſtability in that *critical hour* of Temptation, is a choice and ſingular Mercy, in as much as all you are worth in the other World depends upon your ſtanding then, *Rev.* 21. 7, 8. *Rom.* 2. 6, 7. *Luke* 22. 28. Neither can you be ignorant how much you are like to be tryed and put to it then, whether you reſpect the Enemy that engages you, *Eph.* 6. 12. or your own weakneſs, who have been ſo often foiled in leſſer tryals, *Jer.* 12. 5. All the Grace you have, will be little enough to keep the Field, and bear you up from ſinking; and therefore it cannot but be a bleſſed thing, to be able to ſtand and cope with the greateſt difficulties, in ſuch a nick of triall as that will be. Now he that expects to do this, muſt *put on the whole Armour of God.* See *Epheſ.* 6. 12, 13, 14. There's no expectation of ſtanding in the evil day, except *your feet be ſhod*, that is, your Wills prepared, with the *preparation of the Goſpel of Peace.*

It is true, that our ability to ſtand, is not from our own inherent grace; *for by his ſtrength ſhall no man prevail*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 9. and yet it is as true, that without grace, both inherent in us, and excited and prepared for action, we cannot expect to ſtand: For theſe two, Grace inherent in us, and Grace exciting and aſſiſting without, are not *oppoſed*, but *co-ordinated.* Grace in us, is the Weapon by which

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our Enemy falls; but then that Weapon must be managed by the Hand of the Spirit.---- Well then, look upon this as a choice mercy, which tends so much to your stability.

7. A seventh Excellency of a prepared Heart, is, that it is a very high testification of our love to Jesus Christ, when we thus shew our willingness to take our Lot with him, and follow him whereever he goes. What an high expression of love was that of *Ruth*, to her Mother *Naomy*; *I will not go back, but where thou lodgest I will lodge, and where thou goest I will go.* 'Tis excellent, when a Soul can say to Christ, as *Ittai* to *David*, 2 Sam. 15. 21. *Surely, in what place my Lord the King shall be, whether in Death, or in Life, even there also will thy Servant be.* This is love indeed, to cleave to him in a time of such distresses and dangers. This is *love which the Waters cannot quench, nor the Flood drown*, Cant. 8. 6. *Probatio amoris, est exhibitio operis*: If you love Christ indeed, shew your love by some fruits of it; and surely, this is a very choice fruit and proof of it. There be many that profess a great deal of love to Christ, but when it comes to this Touch-stone, it appears false and counterfeit, but a meer flourish, when no danger is near: But that Soul which buckles on the Shooe of Preparation, to follow him through Thorns and Briars, and over the Rocks and Mountains of Difficulties and Troubles, loves him indeed, *Jer.* 2. 2, 3. Beloved, it's one of the choicest Discoveries of your love to your Master Christ; yea, it is such a testification of love to him, as Angels are not capable of. They shew their love by their readiness to do his Will, in the execution of which they fly as with Wings, *Ezek.* 1. 24. But you onely have the happiness of testifying your

love, by your readiness to suffer for him, and is not this excellent?

8. When the Heart is prepared for the worst Sufferings, it's an Argument that your Will is subdued to the Will of God; for till this be done in a good measure, you cannot stand ready to suffer for him: But now, to have the Will subdued by Grace to the Will of God, is a very choice and excellent frame indeed; for in this the main power of Grace lieth: Look in what Faculty the chief Residence and strength of sinne was, in the same, the chief Residence and power of Grace, after Conversion, is also: Now it is in the Will, that the strength and power of sinne (before Conversion) lay. See *Joh.* 5. 40. *Psal.* 81. 11. *Jer.* 44. 16, 17. And indeed, it was the Devils strong Hold, which in the Day of Christs Power, he storms and reduces to his Obedience, *Psal.* 110. 3. Oh what a blessed thing is this! the Will rules the Man, it hath the Empire of the whole Man, it commands the Faculties of the Soul, *imperio politico*; and it commands the Members of the Body, *imperio despotico*: Now to have Christ and Grace rule that, which rules and commands your inner and outer Man too, is no small Mercy: And a better Evidence that it is so cannot be given than this, that you stand ready, or do seriously prepare your selves to suffer the hardest things for Christ: If your Will can like that Work, it's an Argument Grace hath conquered and subdued indeed.

9. This Preparation of Heart to Duty, is an excellent thing, because God is so abundantly pleased with it, that he oftens excuses them from sufferings in whom he finds it, and accepts it, as if the service had been actually done. So *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22.

22. 12. he was ready to offer up his *Isaac*'s life to God; but God seeing his Servants heart really prepared, and ready for that difficult service, and high point of Self-denial, provided himself another Sacrifice instead of *Isaac*. *Abraham* shall have his *Isaac* back again, and that with advantage; for he hath with him not onely a choice Experiment of his love to God, but Gods high approbation of him, and acceptation of his Offering. It was all one, in respect of Divine acceptance, as if he had bin slain; and so the Scripture represents it, *Jam.* 2. 21. And in this sense, that Promise is often made good to Gods People, who stand ready to give up their *Isaacs*, their lives, liberties, and dearest enjoyments, to the Lord; *He that will lose his life for my Names sake shall save it*, Luk. 9. 24.

Now what a blessed thing is this! you may this way have the Crown of Martyrdom, and yet not shed one drop of blood for Christ actually. Ah how kindly doth God accept it at his poor Creatures hands, when he sees how willing they are to serve him with their best enjoyments! *It is well* (saith he to *David*) *that it was in thy heart*, 1 King. 8. 18.

10. And then lastly, to add no more, it is beyond Controversie an excellent and blessed thing; because should such a Christian, after all his pains and preparations, be overborn, and fall by Temptation, yet this preparation of his heart excuses his fall, from those aggravations that are upon the falls of others, and will give him both *support* under such a condition, and *encouragement* to hope for a speedy recovery out of it. Ah! it's no small comfort, when a poor Soul that hath been overborn by temptation, can come to God and say, *Lord, thou knowest that this was not a wilful departure from my duty, but*

contrary to the bent and reſolution of my heart, thou ſaweſt my diligence before-hand to prepare for it; thou ſaweſt my fears and tremblings of heart about it; O Lord forgive, O Lord recover thy Servant, waſh away this ſpot, it is one of the ſpots of thy children, an infirmity, not a Rebellion: This may much ſtay the Soul.

Surely in this caſe, thou haſt many grounds of comfort that another wants: For thy ſin being but an infirmity, (1.) It's that which is common to all Saints, *Pſal.* 103. 11, 12, 13, 14. (2.) God hath mercy and pardons for ſuch ſins as theſe, elſe woe to the holieſt Soul, *Pſal.* 130. 3, 4. *Solomon*, upon this ground, pleads for mercy for them that prepared their hearts, 2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19. and God hath laid in ſweet grounds of encouragement for ſuch Souls, *Numb.* 15. 27, 28. *Heb.* 5. 2. How tenderly doth Chriſt deal with the Diſciples under this kind of ſin, *Mat.* 26. 41. and though they forſook him for a time, yet received them again! though they fled from him, yet they all returned again, and appeared boldly for Chriſt afterwards, and ſealed their Confeſſion of him with their blood: and that which recovered them again was this, that their fall and departure was contrary to the reſolution and ſtanding frame and bent of their hearts; for they reſolved all to cleave to him to the death, *Mat.* 26. 35. whereas thoſe that engaged in a profeſſion of him inconſiderately, and never reſolved nor prepared for the worſt, fell off from him, and never returned any more, *Joh.* 6. 66. So then, upon the whole, you cannot but grant, that it is a very bleſſed and excellent thing, to prepare thus for the greateſt Sufferings that can befall us for Chriſt: We come next to ſhew wherein it lies.

CHAP. III.

Evincing the necessity of a sound and reall work of grace upon the heart, to fit a man for the sufferings of Christ.

HAving shewed you that God doth sometimes put his dearest people upon very hard services for him, and what an excellent thing it is to prepare our selves to obey the call of God to them; In the next place I come to shew you, wherein this *preparation* or *readiness* for Sufferings consists, and how many things concur and contribute their assistance to this Work.

Now there is a two-fold *preparation* or *readiness* for Suffering; the one is *habitual*, the other *actual*. That *habitual readiness* is nothing else but the *inclination* of a Soul, to suffer any thing for Christ; which *inclination* ariseth from the Principles of Grace infused into the Soul: But then as fire, though it have a natural inclination to ascend, yet may be violently depresst and hindered, that it cannot ascend actually, so may it be in this case; and therefore, before a man can be fitted for Sufferings, as *Paul* was, there must to this habitual be superadded an *actual readiness*, which is nothing else but the rouzing of Grace out of the sleepy and dull habits, and awakening it to its work in a time of need: as the Lyon is said to lash himself with his Tail, to rouze up his Courage before he fight. The former is a *remote* power; the latter a *proxim* and immediate power. I must handle the former in this Chapter, and you are to know, that *it consisteth in a found and reall work of Grace or Conversion wrought upon*

on

on the soul; without which I shall make it evidently appear to you, that no man can be fit or ready to suffer as a Christian.

What ever stock of natural Courage, moral Principles, or common Gifts of the Spirit be lodged in any mans Breast, yet all this (without special grace) can never fit him to suffer for Christ. And had not this Work been really and soundly wrought upon the heart of this blessed man, as indeed it was, *Acts* 9.3,4,5. he had quickly fainted under his Sufferings; and so will every soul sooner or later do, that suffers not upon the same Principles he did.

1. For first, No man can suffer for Christ, until he be able to deny himself, See *Matth.* 16.24. Self-denial goes in order of Nature before Sufferings. Beloved, In a Suffering hour the Interests of Christ and Self meet like two men upon a narrow Bridge; one must of necessity go back, or the other cannot pass on: If you cannot now deny *Self*, you must deny *Christ*. The Yoke and Dominion of Self must be *cast off*, or else Christs Yoke and Burden cannot be taken on.

It is confest that Self may not onely *consist* with, but be a *motive* to some kind of Sufferings: Ambition and Applause may carry a man far this way; Pride is a *Salamander* that it seems can live in the flames of Martyrdome, 1 *Cor.* 13.3. but to be a *Servant* to Self, and a true *Sufferer* for Christ are incompatible. Self may make you the *Devil's Martyrs*, but Grace onely can make you *Christs Martyrs*. So that let a man be seemingly carried for a while with never so high a Tide of Zeal for Christ, yet if Self be the Spring that feeds it, those self-ends like so many little *Ditches* joyned to the Banks of a River, shall suck and draw away the Water into

into themselves, that the lofty Stream will sink and come to nothing ere it have ran far: So then of necessity Self must be dethroned in the hearts of Christs suffering Servants.

But now it is real Grace onely that deposes Self, and subjects its Interests to Christs; for Sanctification is nothing else but *the dethroneing of exalted self, and the setting up of Christs Interest above it in the Soul.* This is it that alters the property of all a man hath, and superscribes them with a new Title, *Holiness to the Lord*, Isa. 23.18. Zech. 14.20,21. Thenceforth a man looks at himself as none of his own, but past into anothers right, 1 *Cor.*6.19. and that he must neither *live*, nor *act ultimately* for himself, but for Christ, *Rom.* 14.7. *Heb.* 13.7,8. *Phil.* 1.20. He is no more as a *Proprietor*, but a *Steward* of all he hath, and so holds out upon these terms to lay it out or lay it down as may best serve his Masters ends and glory.

All that he is or hath, is by Grace subordinated to Christ; and if once; *subordinated*, then no more *opposed* to him *subordinata non pugnant.* This is it that makes him say, I care not what becomes of me or mine, so Christ may be glorified. *Let Christ be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death,* Phil. 1.20,

By Conversion Christ enters the soul, as an Army doth an Enemies Garrison by Storm, and when he is possest of it by Grace, he presently divides the whole spoil of Self betwixt himself and his Church. This is the first thing that evinces the necessity of a Work of Grace to prepare the heart for Sufferings. 2 *Cor.* 10. 5.

2. And then in the next place, It is as evident that a man can never be fit to suffer hard Things for Christ, until his Spirit be enlarged, raised, and ennobled, so that he be able to despise Dangers,

and

and look Difficulties in the face. That low and *private* Spirit must be removed, and a *publick* Spirit must possess him. If a man be of a feeble and effeminate Spirit, every petty Danger will daunt and sink him; Delicacy and Tenderness is as unsuitable to a Christian as to a Souldier, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3. They that mean to enter into the Kingdome of God, must resolve to make their way through that brake of Troubles betwixt them and it, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. They that will be crowned with Victory, must stand to it, and play the men, as that word imports, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. Look over all the Sacred and Humane Histories, and see if you can find a man that ever honoured Christ by Suffering, that was not of a raised and noble Spirit, and in some measure able to contemn both the allurements and threats of men. So those three noble Jews, *Dan.* 3. 16, 17. so *Moses*, *Heb.* 11. 27. and so our Apostle, *Acts* 20. 24. and the same heroick and brave Spirit was found in the succeeding Ages amongst the Witnesses of Christ. When *Valence* the *Emperour* endeavoured to draw *Basil* from the Faith by Offers of Preferment, *Offer these things* (said he) *to Children*; when he threatned him with torments, *Threaten these things* (said he) *to your Purple Gallants that live delicately.* And the same *Basil* relating the Story of the fourty Martyrs, saith, That when great Honours and Preferments were offered them to draw them from Christ, their answer was, *Why offer you these small things of the world to us (O Emperour) when you know the whole world is contemned by us!* So *Luther*, Money could not tempt him, nor the fear of man daunt him. *Let me* (said he in his Letter to *Staupicius*) *be accounted proud, covetous, a murtherer, guilty of all vices, rather then of wicked silence and cowardize in the Cause of Christ.* Thus you see to to what an height and holy greatness

as the Spirits of suffering Saints in all Ages have been raised.

But now it is Grace that thus raises the Spirits of men above all the smiles and honours, frowns and fears of men: and no other principle but Grace can do it. There is indeed a *natural stoutness* and generosity in some, which may carry them far, as it's said of *Alexander*, that when any great danger approached him, his courage would rise, and he would say, *Jam periculum par animo* Alexandri, here is a danger fit for *Alexander* to encounter; so *Pompey* when disswaded from a dangerous Voyage, answered, *Necesse est ut eam, non ut vivam*, *It's necessary that I go, not that I live.* But this being fed onely by a natural Spring, can carry a man no higher then Nature, and will flag at last. If applause and the observation of the world supply it not, it quickly ebbs and fails.

But as Grace raises men much higher, so it maintains it even when there is nothing to encourage without; when forsaken of all Creatures, and visible supports, 2 *Tim.*4.10. and this it doth three wayes: (1) By guiding him that hath a view of far greater things, which shrinks up all temporary things, and makes them appear but trifles and small matters, *Rom.* 8.18. 2 *Cor.*4.18. By Grace a man rises with Christ, *Col.*3.1. It sets him upon his high places, and thence he looks down upon things below, as very poor and inconsiderable. The great Cities of *Campania* seem but little spots to them that stand on the top of the *Alps.* (2) By teaching him to value and measure all things by another Rule, then he was wont to do. He did once measure life, liberty, riches, honours, by sense and time; and then they seemed great things, and it was hard to deny them; Or thus to slight them; but now he values

values and meaſures all by Faith and Eternity; and eſteems nothing great and excellent, but what hath a reference to the Glory of God, and an influence into Eternity. (3) Grace raiſes and ennobles the Spirit thus, becauſe it is the Divine nature; 'tis the Spirit of Chriſt infuſed into a poor Worm, which makes a ſtrange alteration on him, transforms him into another manner of perſon; as much difference betwixt hir Spirit now, and what it was, as betwixt the Spirit of a *Child*, that is filled with ſmall matters, and taken up with toyes; and of a grave *States-man*, that is daily imployed about the grand affairs of a Kingdome.

3. A man can never ſuffer as a Chriſtian, till his will be ſubjected to the Will of God. He that ſuffers *involuntarily*, and out of neceſſity, not out of choice, ſhall neither have *acceptance* nor *reward* from God. Of neceſſity the will muſt be ſubjected; a man can never ſay, *Thy will be done*, till he can firſt ſay, *Not my will*.

But it is Grace onely that thus conquers and ſubjects the will of man to Gods, *Pſal.* 110.3. This is it that exalts Gods Authority in the Soul, and makes the heart to ſtoop and tremble at his Commands. 'Tis this which makes our will to write its *fiat* at the foot of every Command, and its *placet* under every Order it receives from God. No ſooner was Grace entred into the ſoul of *Paul*, but preſently he cries out, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9.6. The Will is to the Soul what the Wheels are to the Chariot; and Grace to is the Will what Oyl is to thoſe Wheels. When we receive the Spirit of Grace, we are ſaid to *receive an Unction from the holy One*, 1 John 2.20. and then the Soul is made as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, Cant. 6. 12. *Non tardat uncta rota*, it runs freely after the Lord, and chear-

chearfully addresseth it self to every Service.

4. A man can never suffer as a Christian, untill his heart be composed, fixed, and determined to follow the Lord through all Hazards and Difficulties. As long as a man is hesitating and unresolved what to do, whether to go forward, or turn back again to the prosperous World, when a man is at such a *pause* and stand in his way, he is very unfit for Sufferings. All such Divisions do both *weaken* the Soul, and *strengthen* the Temptation: The Devils work is more then half done to his hands in such a Soul; and he is now as unfit to endure hardship for Christ, as a Ship is to ride out a Storm, that hath neither Cable, Anchor, nor Ballast to hold and settle it; but lies at the mercy of every Wave, *James* 1,8. *The double-minded man is unstable in all his wayes.* But it's Grace and nothing besides it, that brings the heart to a fixed resolution and settlement to follow the Lord. 'Tis Grace that *establishes the heart*, *Heb.*13.9. and unites it to fear the Name of God, *Psal.*86.11. This gathers all the Streams into one Channel, and then it runs with much strength, and sweeps away all obstacles before it. So that look as it is with a wicked man that hath sold himself to do wickedly, if he be set upon any one design of sin, he pours out his whole heart and strength in the prosecution of that Design; which is the ground of that saying, *Liberet me Deus ab homine unius tantum negotii*, Let God deliver me from a man of one onely Design. He will do it to purpose: So is it also in Grace; If the heart be composed, fixed, and fully resolved for God, nothing shall then stand before him. And herein lies much of a Christians habitual fitness and ability to suffer.

5. The necessity of Saving-Grace in all Sufferers for Christ will farther appear from this consideration,

tion, That he who will run all hazards for Chriſt, had need of a continual ſupply of ſtrength and refreſhment from time to time. He muſt not depend on any thing that is failable: For what ſhall he do then, when that ſtock is ſpent, and he hath no Proviſion left to live upon? Now all natural qualifications, yea all the common gifts of the Spirit are failable and ſhort-lived things; they are like a ſweet Flower in the boſome, that is an ornament for a little while, but withers preſently: Or like a Pond or Brook occaſioned by a great fall of Rain, which quickly ſinks and dries up, becauſe it is not fed by Springs in the bottome, as other Fountain-waters are: and hence it is they cannot continue and hold out when Sufferings come, *Matt.*13.21. becauſe there is no Root to nouriſh and ſupport. The Hypocrite will not alwayes call upon God, *Job* 27.10. Though they may keep company with Chriſt a few miles in this dirty way, yet they muſt turn back at laſt and ſhake hands eternally with him, *John* 6.66. Theſe *Commets* may ſeem to ſhine for a time among the Stars, but when that earthly matter is ſpent, they muſt fall and loſe their glory.

But now, Grace is an everlaſting principle, it hath Springs in the bottome that never fail. *It ſhall be in him* (ſaith Chriſt) *a Well of water ſpringing up into eternal life*, John 4.14. The Spirit of God ſupplies it from time to time as need requires. It hath daily incomes from Heaven, 2 *Cor.*1.5. *Phil.*4.13. *Col.*1.11. So that it is our union with Chriſt the Fountain by Grace, that is the true ground of our conſtancy and long-ſuffering.

Munimur quatenus unimur.

6. And then laſtly. It will appear by this alſo, that there is an abſolute neceſſity of a real change by Grace on all that will ſuffer for Chriſt; becauſe al-

although we may *engage* our selves in sufferings without it, yet we can never *manage* our sufferings like Christians without it. They will neither be honourable, or acceptable to God, nor yet beneficial and comfortable to our selves or others, except they be performed from this principle of Grace: for upon what principle soever beside this, any man is acted in Religion, it will either cause him to decline Sufferings for Christ: or if he be engaged in them, yet he will little credit Religion by his Sufferings. They will either be spoiled by an ill management, or his own pride will devour the praise and glory of them. I do not deny, but a man that's graceless, may suffer many hard things upon the account of his profession, and suffer them all in vain, as these Scriptures manifest. See 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. *Gal.* 3. 4. and although you find many sweet Promises made to those that suffer for Christ, yet you must consider, that those pure and spiritual Ends and Motives, by which men ought to be acted in their sufferings, are always supposed and implyed in all those Promises that are made to the external action. And sometimes it is expresst, 1 *Pet.* 4. 16. to suffer [as a Christian] is to suffer from pure Christian Principles, and in a Christian manner, with *Meekness*, *Patience*, *Self-denial*, &c. and this onely Grace can enable you to do: So that by all this I suppose what I have undertaken in this Chapter, *viz.* to evince the necessity of a Work of Grace to pass upon you, before Sufferings for Religion come, is by all this performed to satisfaction.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein the Nature of this Work of Grace, in which our habitual fitneſs for ſuffering lies, is briefly opened; and an account given of the great advantage the gracious perſon hath for any, even the hardeſt work thereby.

HAving in the former Chapter plainly evinced the neceſſity of ſaving Grace, to fit a man for Sufferings; it will be expected now, that ſome account be given you of the nature of this Work, and how it advantages a man for the diſcharge of the hardeſt ſervices in Religion: Both which I ſhall open in this Chapter, by a diſtinct Explication of the parts of this deſcription of it.

What ſaving Grace is.

This work of Grace, of which I am here to ſpeak, conſiſts in the reall change of the whole Man, by the Spirit of God, whereby he is prepared for every good work: In which brief Deſcription, I ſhall open theſe four things to you.

1. That it is a Change; this is palpably evident, both from Scripture and Experience. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *Old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new*; and it is ſo ſenſible a Change, that it's called a *turning from darkneſs to light*, Act. 26. 18. and a new Creature formed and brought forth. But to be a little more diſtinct and particular, there are ſeverall other Changes that paſs upon men, which muſt not be miſtaken for this: and therefore, (1.) It is not a meer change of the Judgment from Errour to Truth, from Paganiſme to Chriſtianity. Such a Change *Simon Magus* had, yet ſtill remained in the Gall of Bitterneſs, and faſt bound in the Bonds of In-

Iniquity, *Act.*8.23. (2.) Nor onely of a mans practice, from *Prophaneſs* to *Civility*; this is common among ſuch as live under the Light of the Goſpel, which breaking into mens Conſciences, thwarts their Luſts, and over-awes them with the fears of Hell: Which is no more then what the *Gentiles* had, *Rom.* 2. 15. (3.) Nor is it a change from meer *Morality*, to meer *Formality* in Religion. Thus *Hypocrites* are changed, by the common gifts of the Spirit, illuminating their Minds, and ſlightly touching their Affections, *Heb.*6.4,5. (4.) Nor is it ſuch a Change as Juſtification makes, which is relative, and onely alters the ſtate and condition, *Rom.*5.1,2. (5.) Laſtly, it is not a change of the Eſſence of a Man; he remains eſſentially the ſame perſon ſtill.

But this Change conſiſts in the infuſion of New Habits of Grace, into the old Faculties; which immediatly depoſe ſinne from its dominion over the Soul, and deliver up the Soul into the Hands and Government of Chriſt, ſo that it lives no more to it ſelf, but to Chriſt. This is that Change whereof we ſpeak: And this Change (2) I aſſert to be *reall*, no phanſie, nor deluſion; not a groundleſs conceit, but it is really exiſtent, *extra mentem*, whether you conceit it or not. Indeed, the blind World would perſwade us it is *ſuppoſititious*, and *phantaſtick*; and that there is no ſuch reall difference betwixt one man and another, as we affirm Grace makes. And hence it is, that whoever profeſſeth it, is preſently branded for a *Phanatique*; and that Scripture, *Eſa.* 56.5. *Stand by thy ſelf, I am holier then thou*, &c. clapt in their Teeth, in their abſurd and perverſe ſenſe of it.

But I ſhall briefly offer theſe ſeven things to your conſideration, which will abundantly evince the

reality of it, and at once both ſtop the ſlanderou Mouthes of ignorant men, and ſilence thoſe Atheiſtical Surmiſes, which at any time Sathan may inject into the hearts of Gods own people touching this matter. And *firſt*, let it be conſidered, that the Spirit of God hath repreſented to us this Work of Grace, under ſuch Names and Notions in Scripture, as if they had been choſen purpoſely to obviate this Calumny. It's called a *Creature*, *Gal.* 6. 15. a *Man*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. a *New Birth*, *Joh.* 3. 3. Chriſt formed in us, *Gal.* 4. 19. all which expreſs its reallity, and that it is not a conceited thing. (2.) It appears to be reall by the marvellous effects it hath upon a man, turning him both in Judgment, Will, Affections, and Practice, quite counter to what he was before. This is evident, in that famous inſtance of *Paul*, Gal. 1. 23. which is abundantly atteſted and ſealed, by the conſtant experience of all gracious Souls, that are Witneſſes of the Truth hereof. (3.) A Divine and Almighty Power goes forth to produce and work it: and hence Faith is ſaid to be of the operation of God, *Col.* 2. 12. Yea, that the ſame Power which raiſed Jeſus Chriſt from the Dead, goes to the production of it, *Epheſ.* 1. 19, 20. And if ſo, how much leſs then Blaſphemy is it, to call it a Conceit or Phanſie? Doth God ſet on work his infinite Power to beget a Phanſie, or raiſe an imagination? (4.) Conceits and Whimſies abound moſt in men of weak Reaſon: Children, and ſuch as are crackt in their Underſtandings have moſt of them: ſtrength of Reaſon baniſhes them, as the Sun doth Miſts and Vapours: But now the more rational any gracious perſon is, by ſo much the more he is fixed, ſetled, and ſatisfied in the Grounds of Religion: Yea, there is the higheſt and pureſt Reaſon in Religion: and when this Change is wrought

wrought upon men, it's carryed on in a rational way, *Esa.* 1. 18. *Joh.* 16. 9. The Spirit overpours the Understanding with clear Demonstrations, and silences all Objections, Pleas, and Pretences, to the contrary. (5) It's a real thing, and gracious Souls know it to be so; else so many Thousands of the Saints would never have suffered so many cruel Torments and Miseries, rather then forsake a fancy, and so save all. They have been so well satisfied of the reality of that which the World calls a Phansie, that they have chosen rather to embrace the Stake, than deny it. The constancy of Christians, in cleaving to Religion, was common to a *Proverb* among the *Heathen*; who when they would express the greatest difficulty, would say, *You may as soon turn a Christian from Christ as do it.* Surely no wise man would sacrifice his Liberty, Estate, Life, and all that is dear, for a Conceit. (6) It's reality appears in its uniformity in all those on whom it is wrought: *They have all obtained like precious Faith*, 2 Pet. 1. 1. *They are all changed into the same Image*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. Three Thousand Persons affected in one and the same manner at one Sermon, *Act.* 2. 37. Could one and the same Conceit possess them all together? Take two Christians that live a Thousand miles distant from each other, that never heard of one another, let these Persons be examined, and their Reports compared, and see if they do not substantially agree; and whether as Face answers Face in Water, so their Experiences do not answer one to the other? which could never be, if it were a groundless Conceit. (7) And lastly, it's manifest, it is a reality, and puts a real difference betwixt one and another; because God carryes himself so differently towards them, after their Conversion; now he smiles, before he frowned; now they are

under the Promises, before they were under the Threats and Curses; and what a vast difference will be put betwixt the one and other in that great Day? See *Mat.* 25. Surely, if these nominal Christians did but differ in Conceit, not really from others, the Righteous Judge of all the Earth would not pass such a different Judgment and Doom upon them.

By all this you evidently see, that Grace is a reall Change, and not a conceited one.

3. We say that this reall Change passes upon the whole Man: he is changed in *Soul*, *Body*, and *Practice*; all things are become new. (1) This Change appears in his Soul: For by it, (1) his Understanding is strongly altered, and receives things in another way than formerly. It did look at Christ and things Eternal, as uncertain and light matters: The things that are seen and present, did mostly affect, and appeared great and excellent: It admired Riches and Honours, while Christ and Glory were over-looked and despised. But now, all these Temporals are esteemed Dung, Dross, Vanity, *Phil.* 3. 8. *Rom.* 8. 18. and Jesus Christ is now esteemed *the wisdom and the power of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. It did look on the Saints as despicable persons, but now as the *excellent of the Earth*, Psal. 16. 3. Strictness and Duty was once esteemed a needless thing, but now the onely thing desiresble, *Psal.* 119. 14. Oh, saith the renewed Soul, *Where were mine Eyes, that I could see no more excellency in Christ, his ways, and people?* (2) It stops not there (as it doth in Hypocrites) but passes on further, and reduces the Will; that strong Hold is taken, and delivered up to Christ. It did rebel against God, and could not be subject, but now it submits, *Act.* 9. 6. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* In the day of Christs power, he presents himself in all his drawing glory and love-

lyness

lyneſs before the Will, and cryes to that ſtubborn Faculty, *Open to me, open to me*; with which Word there goes forth an opening and ſubduing Power, which the Will no ſooner feels, but it ſpontaneouſly moves towards him, and ſaith, *Stand open ye everlaſting Gates, that the King of Glory may come in.* Henceforth it votes for God, ſubſcribes and ſubmits to his Will, as its onely Rule and Law; and indeed, it becomes the principal Seat where Grace makes its Reſidence; and where, for the moſt part, it is more viſible then in any other Faculty. For after a man hath ſearched for it in all other Faculties, and cannot diſcern it, yet here he ordinarily finds it; to will is preſent, *Rom.*7.18. (3) The Will being thus gained to Chriſt, Love comes in of courſe; it feeling the power of Grace alſo, preſently changeth its Object: It ſeizeth not ſo greedily on Earthly Objects as before, but is ſtrangely cooled and deadned to them, by the appearance of a far greater Glory in Jeſus Chriſt; which hath ſo captivated the Soul, and ſtrongly attracted this Affection, that its now become very remiſs in all its actings towards them: and often, (eſpecially at firſt) it is ſo weaned from all things on Earth, that the Temptation ſeems to lye on the other Extream, even in too great neglect of our lawful Employments and Comforts. Now Jeſus Chriſt, *Cant.*1.3. his Ordinances, *Pſal.* 119. 97. and his Saints, 1 *Joh.*3.14. are the onely Delights, and ſweeteſt Companions; he could ſit from Morning to Night, to hear Diſcourſes of Chriſt his beloved, and could live and die in the company of his people, whoſe company is now moſt delightful and ſweet, *Pſal.* 119. 63. (4) The Deſires are altered, they pant no more after the Duſt of the Earth, *Pſal.*4.6. but pant for God, as the *Hart for the Brooks of water*, *Pſal.*42.1. Yea, ſo big

is the Soul with them, that it's ſometimes ready to faint, yea to break with the longing it hath after him, *Pſal.* 119. 20. (5) The Thoughts are changed, *Pſal.* 119. 113. and the Thoughts of God are now moſt precious, *Pſal.* 139. 47. muſing, when alone, of him; and, in its Solitudes, the Soul entertains it ſelf with a delightful Feaſt, which its Thoughts of God bring in to refreſh it, *Pſal.* 63. 5, 6. (6) The Deſigns and Projects of the Soul are changed; all are now ſwallowed up in one grand Deſign, even to approve himſelf to God, and be accepted of him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. and if he fail not there, it will not much trouble him, if all his other Deſigns ſhould be daſhed.

It were eaſie to inſtance in the reſt of the Affections, and ſhew how Grace ſpreads and diffuſes it ſelf into them all, as Light in the Air, or Leaven in the Lump; but this may ſuffice, to ſhew how it paſſes upon the whole Soul, and enters the ſeveral Faculties and Affections thereof.

And the Soul being thus poſſeſt for God, the Body, with all its Members, is conſequently reſigned up to him alſo: For the Will hath the *Empire* of the Members of the Body, as well as of the Paſſions and Affections of the Soul. Theſe are not any more delivered up to execute the Luſts of Satan, but are yielded up to God for his ends and uſes, *Rom.* 6. 19. And thus you have the third thing in the Deſcription, made out alſo, that it is an univerſal, as well as a reall Change. But then,

4. Laſtly, You muſt know that by this change God prepares a man for choice and excellent ſervices; and this indeed is the main thing deſigned in this Capter, and is the reſult and iſſue of all that hath hitherto been ſaid about this work of Grace.

Beloved, can you imagine that God would imploy

by his infinite and glorious Power, to produce his new Creature in such an excellent nature, it being the Masterpiece of all his Works of wonder wrought upon man, and not aim at some singular use and excellent end? Every wise Agent designs some end; and what God aims at he hath told us, *Isa.*43.21. *Ephes.*2.20. And accordingly he expects singular things from such persons, *Mat.*5.47. If God had not aimed at some new service, he need not have made a new Creature: the old Creature was fit enough for the old use and service it was imployed in. But God hath some choice service to be done, wherein he will be glorified. He will have his Name glorified even in this world by the active and passive obedience of his people. But this being far above all the power of Nature, God therefore brings them forth in a new and heavenly nature, endowed with rare supernatural and divine qualities, by which it is fitted and excellently prepared for any service of God by doing or by suffering, which before he had no fitness or ability for.

The very make and constitution of this new Creature speaks its use and end: As now, if a man look upon a Sword or Knife (supposing he had never seen either before) yet I say by viewing the shape and properties of it, he will say, This was made to cut. Even so here, This new Creature was formed for some glorious and singular service for God, to which it is exceedingly advantaged, whether God put you upon doing or suffering. If you ask wherein this advantage of the new Creature to honour God either way lies; I answer, It principally consists in its *heavenly inclination*, or natural *tendency* to God. This is its great advantage. For by vertue of this,

1. If God call a man to any duty, there is a *Prin-*

Principle within closing with the *Command* without, and moving the soul freely & spontaneously to duty, *Psal.*27.8. If God say, *Seek my face*, such an heart ecchoes to the call, *Thy face Lord will I seek.* And this is it which is call'd, *The writing of Gods Law in the heart*, Jer.31.33. and must needs be a mighty advantage; for now its work is its delight and wages, *Psal.*19.11. The command to such a Soul is not grievous, 1 *John* 5.3. And by this it's kept from tiring in duty, and being weary of its work; as you see what pains Children can take at play, how they will run and sweat, and endure knocks and falls, and take no notice of it; put them upon any manual labour, and they cannot endure half so much. When our work is our delight, we never faint nor tire at it. This inclination to God is to the Soul as wings to a Bird, or sails to a Ship. This carries the Soul easily through every duty. O there is a vast difference betwixt a man that *works for wages*, and one whose *work is wages* to him. And here you may at once see wherein the principal difference betwixt the Hypocrite and the real Christian lies in the performance of duty; and also have a true account of the reason why one perseveres in his work to the end, when the other flags. Why, here is the true account of both; The one is moved to duty from a natural inclination to it, the other is forced upon it by some external motives: For the Hypocrite takes not delight in the spiritual and inward part of duty, but is secretly weary of it, *Mal.*1.13. onely his ambition and self-ends put him upon it as a task. But now the upright heart goes to God as his joy, *Psal.* 42.4. and saith, *It is good for me to draw nigh to God*, Psal.73. *ult.* When the Sabbath comes, (*that Golden Spot of the Week*) oh how he longs to *see the beauty of the Lord* in his Or-

dinances! *Psal.*27.4. and when engaged in the worship of God, he cannot satisfie himself in *bodily exercice*, or to serve God *in the oldness of the letter*. He knoweth that *this perswasion cometh not of him that called him*, Gal. 5.7,8. He labours to engage his heart to approach to God, *Jer.*30.21. And hence those mountings of heart, and violent sallies of the desires heaven-ward. And thus you see one rare advantage to glorifie God actively, flowing from the inclination of this new Creature.

2. But then secondly; Hence in like manner hath the Soul as great an advantage for sufferings: For this new Creature having such a natural tendency to God, will enable the soul in which it is, to break its way to God through all the interposing obstacles and discouragements. What are persecutions, what are reproaches, what are the fears and frowns of enemies, but so many blocks thrown in the Souls way to keep it from God and Duty? And indeed where this principle of Grace is wanting, they prove inaccessible Mountains. Graceless hearts are stalled and quite discouraged by them; but now this tendency of the Soul to God enables the Christian to break his way through all. You may say of him in such a case, as the Historian doth of *Hannibal* (who forced a way over the *Alps* with Fire and Vinegar) either he will find a way, or make a way. *Shall Sword or Famine, or any other Creature separate me from Christ?* saith an upright Soul. No, no, it will through all to him, and that from this tendency of his new Nature. You see in Nature, every thing hath a tendency to its center; Fire will up, do what you can to suppress it; Water will to the Sea, if it meet with Dams, yea Mountains in its way; if it cannot bear them down, it will creep about some other way, and wind and

turn

turn to find a passage to the Sea. God is the centre of all gracious Spirits, and Grace will carry the soul through all to him. This is Grace, and this your advantage by it in the most difficult part of your work. It will carry you through all; make the hardest work easie and pleasant, 2 *Cor.*12.10. And if great sufferings or temptations interpose betwixt you and your God, it will break through all, and enable you to withstand all; as it did *Paul* in the Text, who forced his way not onely through the fury of Enemies, but also through the entreaties and tears of Friends.

CHAP. V.

In which the necessity of getting clear evidences of this work of Grace in us, in order to our readiness for sufferings is held forth; the nature of that evidence opened, and divers things that cloud and obscure it removed out of the way.

I Have done with *habitual readiness*, consisting in an inwrought work of Grace. The following particulars are the things in which our *actual readiness* lies. And of them that which comes next to be handled, is the getting of clear evidences in our own souls that this work hath been wrought on us, this will exceedingly tend to your strengthning and comfort in a suffering hour. Blessed *Paul* who here professeth himself ready both for Bonds and Death, was clear in this point, 2 *Tim.*4.6,7. 2 *Tim.*1.12. And indeed had he been cloudy and dark in this, he could not have said, I am ready. No, no, he had been in an ill case to undertake that Journey to *Jerusalem*: And thou wilt find it a singular advantage

in dark and difficult dayes to have all clear and within. Now for the opening of this, I will

1. What the evidence or manifestation of the of Grace is.
2. How it appears to be of such great advantage suffering Saint.
3. Prescribe some Rules for the obtaining it.

1. What it is. And in short it's nothing else but *Spirit shining upon his own work in the hearts of believers, thereby enabling them sensibly to see and feel to their own satisfaction.* And this is expresst in Scripture under a pleasant variety of Metaphors. Sometimes it is called the *shedding abroad of the* love of God in the heart, *Rom.*5.5. sometimes *the lifting up of the light of Gods countenance*, Psal.4.6. and sometimes it's expresst without a *trope*, by Christs *manifesting himself* to the soul, *John.*14.21.

For the opening of it, I desire you would consider these six things.

1. That it is attainable by Believers in this life, and that in a very high degree and measure. Many of the Saints have had it in a full measure, 1 *Cor.* 2.12. 1 *John* 3.24. *John* 21.15.

2. Though it be attainable by Believers, yet it is a thing separable from true Grace, and many precious souls have gone mourning for the want of it, *Isa.*50.10. This was sometimes the case of *Heman*, *David*, *Job*, and multitudes more.

3. During its continuance it is the sweetest thing in the world. It swallowes up all Troubles, and doubles all other Comforts: It puts more gladness into the heart, then the increase of Corn and Wine, *Psal.*4.6. *Suavis hora, sed brevis mora; sapit quidem suavissime, sed gustatur rarissime*, Bern.

4. Both

4. Both in the continuation and removal of the Spirit acts *arbitrarily*. No man can say how long he shall walk in this pleasant Light, *Psal.* 30. 7. *By thy favour thou hast made my Mountain stand strong: thou hiddest thy face, and I was troubled.* And when in darkness, none can say how long it will be ere that sweet Light break forth again. God can scatter the Cloud unexpectedly in a moment, *Cant.* 3.4. *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth.* There is such an observable difference in *David*'s Spirit in some Psalms, as if one man had written the beginning, and another the end of them.

5. Though God can quickly remove the darkness and doubts of a soul; yet ordinarily the Saints find it a very hard and difficult thing to obtain and preserve the evidences of their Graces. Such is the darkness, deadness, and deceitfulness of the heart, so much unevenness and inconstancy in their practice, so many counterfeits of Grace, and so many wiles and devices of Satan to rob them of their peace, that few (in comparison) live in a constant and quiet fruition of it.

6. Notwithstanding all these things which increase the difficulty; yet God hath afforded his people a sure Light, and sufficient means in the diligent use and improvement whereof they may attain a certainty of the work of Grace in them. And there is a threefold Light by which it may most clearly and infallibly be discovered.

1. Scripture Light, which is able to discover the secrets of a mans heart to him; and is therefore compared to the *Anatomizers* Knife, *Heb.* 4.12.

2. The innate Light of Grace it self; or if you will the Light of Experience, 1 *John* 5.10. It hath some properties and operations which are as essential,

tial, necessary, and inseparable, as heat is to the fire, and may be sensibly felt and perceived by the Soul, *Psal.* 119. 20.

3. The Light of the Spirit, superadded to both the former, which is sometimes called its *Earnest*, sometimes its *Seal*. The Spirit doth both *plant* the *habits*, *excite* and draw forth the *acts*, and also *shine* upon his own work that the Soul may see it; and that sometimes with such a degree of Light, as onely begets peace, and quiets the heart, though it do not fully conquer all the doubts of it. And at other times the heart is irradiated with so clear a Beam of Light, that it's able to draw forth the triumphant Conclusion, and say, Now I know the things that are freely given me of God. I believe and am sure.

And so much briefly for the opening of the nature of this evidence.

2. I shall shew you the necessity of it to a suffering Saint, in order to the right management of a suffering condition.

And this will appear by the consideration of five things.

1. You will readily grant that the Christians love to God hath a mighty influence into all his sufferings for God. This Grace of *love* enables him victoriously to break through all difficulties and discouragements. *The Floods cannot drown it, nor the Waters quench it*, Cant. 8. 6, 7. It facilitates the greatest hardships, 1. *John* 5. 3. And whatever a man suffer, if it be not from this principle, it is neither acceptable to God, nor available to himself, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. 1 *Dem.*

But now nothing more inflames and quickens the Christians love to God, then the knowledge of his interest in him, and the sensible perception and taste

taste of his love to the Soul. Our love to God is but a reflection of his own love: And the more powerfull the stroke of the direct Beam is, the more is the reflex Beam also. Never doth that *flame of Jah* burn with a more vehement heat, then when the Soul hath the most clear manifestations of its interest in Christ and his benefits, *Luke* 7.47.

2 *Dem.* It must needs be of singular use to a suffering Saint, because it takes out the sinking weight of affliction. That which sinks and breaks the Spirit, is the conjunction and meeting of inward and outward troubles together; then if the Lord do not strangely and extraordinarily support the Soul, it's wrackt and overwhelmed as the Ship in which *Paul* sailed was, when it fell into a place where two Seas met, *Acts* 27.41. Oh how tempestuous a Sea doth that Soul sail in, that hath fightings *without*, and fears *within!* How must that poor Christians heart tremble and meditate terrour, that when he retires from troubles without for some comfort and support within, shall find a sad *addition* to his troubles from whence he expected relief against them! Hence it was that *Jeremy* so earnestly deprecates such a misery, *Be not thou a terrour to me, thou art my hope in the day of evil*, Jer.17.17. This is prevented by this means: If a man have a clear breast, and all be quiet within, he is like one that hath a good Roof over his head when the Storm falls. *We glory in tribulation, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts*, Rom.5.3,5.

3 *Dem.* It is a fountain of joy and comfort in the darkest and saddest hour. Hence the glorious triumphs of Saints in their afflictions, *Rom.*5.5. and in the Christians joy in the Lord, lies much of his strength for sufferings, *Neh.*8.10. If once the Spirit droop and sink, the man is in a bad case to suffer: holy joy, it

is

is the Oyl that makes the Chariot-wheels of the Soul free to follow the Lord; *Non tardat unctio rotis.* To suffer with joyfullness for Christ is a qualification that Gods Eye is much upon in his suffering Servants, *Col.* 1.11. How did these famous Worthies magnifie Christ, and glorifie Religion by the holy triumphs of their faith and joy under tribulation! One kiss'd the *Apparator* that brought him news of his Condemnation, and was like a man transported with an excess of joy. Another upon the pronouncing of the Sentence, kneels down, and with hands and eyes lifted up, solemnly blesses God for such a day as that. Oh how is Christ magnified by this! And this can not be untill interest be cleared. It's true the *faith of recumbency* gives the Soul a secret support, and enables the Christian to *live*; but the *faith of evidence* keeps him *lively*, and prevents all those uncomfortable and uncomely sinkings and despondencies of spirit, 2 *Cor.* 4.16,17. and therefore cannot but be of singular use to a soul at such a time.

Lastly, It is of special use to a Christian under sufferings, inasmuch as it enables him to repell the temptations that attend upon sufferings. Nothing sets a keener edge upon his indignation against unworthy compliances, then this. Indeed a poor cloudy and dubious Christian will be apt to catch at deliverance, though upon terms dishonourable to Christ: but he that is clear in point of interest, abhors compositions and capitulations upon unworthy terms and conditions, *Heb.* 11.35. *Heb.* 10.34. He that sees the gain and reward of suffering, will think he is offered to his loss, when life and deliverance are set before him upon such hard terms as sin is. 4 *Dem.*

And thus you see what influence it hath into a suffering condition.

3. In the next place I promised to prescribe some Rules for the attaining of this Evidence, and the dispelling of those Doubts by which it is usually clouded in the souls of Believers. And oh that by the faithfull use of them you may attain it against a suffering day come upon you.

1 *Rule.* And the first Rule I shall give you is this. Make it your business to improve Grace more; for the more *vigorous* it is, the more *evidential* it must needs be, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. Oh how much time have many Christians spent in enquiring after the lowest signs of sincerity, and what may consist with Grace; which had they spent in the diligent improvement of the means of Grace for the increasing of it, they would have found it a shorter cut to peace and comfort by much.

2 *Rule.* Mistake not the Rule by which you are to trie your selves, least you gain a false judgement upon your selves. Some are apt to make those things signs of Grace, which are not; and when the falseness of them is detected, how is that poor Soul plunged into doubts and fears, that leaned upon them. As now, If a man should conclude his sincerity from his diligence in attending on the Word preached; this is but a *Paralogism* (as the Apostle calls it) *Jam.* 1. 22. by which a man deceiveth his own Soul: For that which is a note or mark, must be proper to the thing notified, and not common to any thing else. There are divers sorts of *marks*; some are *exclusive*, the principal use of which is to convince bold Pretenders, and discover Hypocrites. Such is that, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. It is a most certain sign where these are, there is no Grace; but yet it will not follow on the contrary, that where these are not,

there is Grace. See *Luke* 18.11. Others are *obvious*, the use of which is not so much for trying of the truth, and the strength and degrees of Grace. As now when Faith is described by the *efficacy* of it, or by some of its heroick acts and promises made to some raised degrees and operations of it, as that, *Ephes.*3.12. *&c.* Here a mistake is easily made. Besides these, or rather before these, are another sort of marks, which are called *positive* marks; and these agreeing to the lowest degree of Grace, are for the trial of the truth and sincerity of it. Such are these, 1 *John* 3.3. 1 *John* 2.3. *Matth.*5.3. Be sure to try by a proper mark.

3 *Rule.* Take heed of such sins as violate and waste the Conscience: For these will quickly raise a mist, and involve the Soul in clouds and darkness, *Psal.* 51. *&c.* Such are sins against Light, and the reclamations of Conscience.

4 *Rule.* Labour to shun those common mistakes that Christians make in judging of their state; amongst which I shall select these five as principal ones.

1. Call not your condition into question upon every failing, and involuntary lapse into sin. *Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away,* Psal. 65.3. In short, thou needest not call thy condition into question, provided thou find thy Spirit working as *Paul*'s did under the surprisals of temptation; *viz.* If (1) thou do approve of, and delight in the Law, though thou fall short of it in thy practice, *Rom.* 7.12, 14. (2) If thy failings be involuntary, and against the resolution and bent of thy Soul, *vers.* 15.18, 19. (3) If it be the load and burden of thy Soul, *vers.* 24. (4) If the thoughts of deliverance comfort thee, *vers.* 25.

2. Question not the truth of thy Grace, because it was not wrought in the same way and manner in thee, as in others: For there is great variety, as to the circumstances of *time* and *manner* betwixt the Spirits operations upon one, and another. Compare the History of *Paul's* Conversion with that of the *Jaylor*, *Zacheus*, or *Lydia*.

3. Conclude not that you have no grace, because you feel not those transportations and ravishing joyes that other Christians speak of. If thou canst not say as *Paul* doth, *Rom.* 8.38. yet bless God, if thou canst but breath forth such language as that, *Mark* 9.24.

4. Say not thou hast no Grace, because of the high attainments of some Hypocrites, who in some things may excell thee. When some persons read the sixth Chapter to the *Hebrews*, they are startled to see to what a glorious height the Hypocrite may soar; not considering that there are these three things wherein they excell the most glorious Hypocrite in the world. (1) That Self was never dethroned in Hypocrites, as it is in them. All that an Hypocrite doth is for himself. (2) The Hypocrite never hated every sin, as he doth; but hath still some *Agag*, *Rimmon*, or *Delilah*. (3) That the Hypocrite never acted in duty from the bent and inclination of a new nature, taking delight in heavenly imployment, but is moved rather as a Clock by the weights and poises of some external motives and advantages.

5. Conclude not you have no Grace, because you grow not so sensibly, as some other Christians do. You may be divers wayes mistaken about this. (1) You may measure your growth by your desires and then it appears nothing; for the Christian aims high, and grasps at all. (2) Or by comparing your-

selves

lves with such as have larger capacities, time, and dvantages then you. (3) Or by comparing your Graces with other mens Gifts, which you mistake for their Graces. (4) Or by thinking that all growth is upward in joy, peace, and comfort; whereas you may grow in mortification and humility, which is as true a growth as the former. Oh! take heed of these mistakes; they have been very prejudicial to the peace of many Christians.

Lastly, Decline not sufferings when God gives you a fair call to them. Oh! the Christians suffering time is commonly his cleerest and most comfortable time. See that Golden Letter of *Pomponius Algerius*, P---- *Then the spirit of God and glory resteth on them*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. That which hath been in suspence for some years, is decided and cleared in a suffering hour. And thus I have shewed you how to *attain this necessary qualification also.* 5 *Rule.*

CHAP. VI.

Discovering the necessity of an improved faith for the right management of sufferings; and directing to some special means for the improvement thereof.

THe next thing conducing to our actual readiness for sufferings, is the improvement of Faith to some considerable degree of strength. This is the Grace that must do the main service in such an hour, and hath the principal hand in supporting the Christian under every burden. This is the Grace that crowns our heads with victory in the day of battel, *Ephes.* 6. 16. *Above all taking the shield of Faith.* It's true every Grace is of use, and contributes assistance: suffering Saints have been be-

holding to them all. But of this we may say, as *Solomon* of the vertuous woman, *Though many Graces have done excellently, yet this excels them all.* In this Grace ready *Paul* was eminent. It was the life he daily lived, *Gal.* 2. 20. Oh it is a precious grace, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. so precious that Christ, who seldome admired at any thing, yet wondred at this, *Mat.* 8. 10. A victorious Grace it is that overcomes all difficulties, *Mark* 9. 23. By this Sword it was that all those famous *Heroes*, *Heb.* 11. atchieved all those glorious conquests; and in every distress it may say to the Soul, as Christ to the Disciples, *John* 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing.* This is that *Sword* that hath obtained so many Victories over the world, 1 *John* 5. 4. and that trusty *Shield* that hath quenched so many deadly Darts of temptation, as have been level'd at the very heart of the Christian in the day of battel. By it a Christian lives, when all outward sensible comforts die, *Hab.* 2. 4. It's the ground upon which the Christian fixes his foot, and never fails under him, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. The necessity of it will more clearly appear, by considering how many wayes it relieves the soul in trouble, and disburthens the heart of all its sinking loads and pressures. there are two things that sink a mans Spirit when under sufferings; *viz.* The *greatness* of the troubles, and the *weakness* of the soul to bear them; against both which Faith relieves the soul; *viz.* by making a weak soul *strong*, and heavy troubles *light.*

First, It makes a weak Soul strong and able to bear; and this it doth divers ways.

1. By purging out of the Soul those enfeebling and weakning Distempers; not onely *guilt* in generall, which is to the Soul, as a Wound upon the bearing shoulder, *Rom.* 5. 1. The removal, when it

enables

enables the Soul to bear any other Burden, *Isa.* 33.

But it also removes *Fear*, the Tyrant Passion that cuts the Nerves of the Soul. For, as Faith comes in, so Fear goes out: Look in what degree the Fear of God is ascendant in the Soul, proportionably the sinful fear of the Creature declines and vanisheth, *Esa.* 8. 12, 13. This fear extinguishes that, as the Sun-shine puts out fire: *The Righteous is bold as a Lion*, Prov. 28. 1. The word בטח signifies a young Lion in his hot blood, that knows no such thing as fear: And look how much of the Soul is *empty* of Faith, so much its *filled* with fear: *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little Faith?* Mat. 8. 26. Certainly, it's a rare advantage, to be freed from the *common distraction*, in times of *common distraction*: and this advantage the Soul hath by Faith.

2. It strengthens the Soul to bear afflictions and hardships, not onely by purging out its weakning Distempers, but by turning it self to Christ, in whom all its strength lyes; and that suitably to the several Exigencies of the Soul, in all its Distresses. Doth Darkness, like the shadow of Death, overspread the Earth, and all the Lights of Earthly Comforts disappear, then Faith supports the Heart, by *looking to the Lord*, Mic. 7. 7. and this look of Faith exceedingly revives the Heart, *Psal.* 34. 5. and enlightens the Soul. Doth God pluck away all Earthly Props from under your Feet, and leave you nothing visible to rest upon, in that Exigence Faith puts forth a suitable act, *viz. Resting or staying upon God*, Esa. 26. 3. and by this the Soul comes to be quieted and established, *Psal.* 131. 1, 2. Do Temptations strive to put off the Soul from Christ, and discourage it from leaning upon the Promise? Then it puts forth *an act of Resolution*, Job 13. 15. and so breaks its way through that discouragement. Or

hath the Soul been long seeking God for deliverance out of trouble, and still there is silence in Heaven, no answer comes; but instead of an Answer, comes a Temptation, to throw up the Duty, and seek to deliver it self? Then Faith puts forth another act upon Christ, suitable to this distress, *viz. An act of waiting*, Isa. 49. 23. which *waiting* is opposed to that *sinful haste* which the Soul is tempted to, Isa. 28. 16. Or doth God at any time call the Soul forth to some difficult service, against which the Flesh and Carnal Reason dispute and plead? now Faith helps the Soul, by putting forth *an act of obedience*, and that whilst Carnal Reason stands by dis-satisfied, *Gal.* 1. 16. And hence it is, that Obedience carryes the name of Faith upon it, to shew its descent, *Rom.* 16. 26. Faith encourages the Soul to obey, not onely by urging Gods *Command*, but by giving it Gods *Warrant* for its Indemnity, *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. Or doth a poor Believer find himself over-match'd by Troubles and Temptations, and his own inherent strength begin to fail under the burden? then Faith leads him to an Omnipotent God, and so secures him from fainting under his Trouble, *Psal.* 61. 2. in the Lord is everlasting strength. *El Shaddai*, is a name of encouragement to a feeble Soul, *Isa.* 40. 29, 30, 31. And thus you see the first particular made good, *viz.* What a strengthning influence it hath into a weak Soul.

Secondly, In the next place, let us see how it *lightens* the Christians Burden, as well as *strengthens* his back to bear.

And certainly, this Grace of Faith doth strangely alter the very Nature of Sufferings, taking away both the *heavines* and *horrour* of them; and this it doth divers ways:

1. By committing the business to Christ, and leaving

the matter with him; and so quitting the Soul all those anxieties and perturbations, which are the very burden and weight of Affliction, *Psal.* 37. For certainly, that which sinks us in dayes of trouble, is rather from within, from our unruly, serious and clamorous Thoughts, then from the troubles themselves with which we conflict: But by committing the matter to God, the Soul is quickly brought to rest.

2. By discovering much present good in our Troubles; the more good Faith discovers in a Trouble, the more supportable and easie it makes it to the Soul. Now Faith brings in a comfortable Report, that they are not *onely evils*, as the Troubles of the wicked are, *Ezek.* 7. 5. but have an allay and mixture of much good, *Heb.* 12. 10. *Isa.* 27. 9.

3. By fore-seeing the end and final removal of them, and that near at hand, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. That which daunts and amazes men in times of trouble, is, that they can see no end of them. Hence the heart faints, and hands hang down through discouragement: But now Faith brings the joyful Tidings of the end of Troubles, and saith to the Soul, *Why art thou cast down O my Soul? and why so disquieted and discouraged within me? as if thy Travails were like the sufferings of the Damned, endless and everlasting, whereas they are but for a moment. Yet a little, a very little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10. 37. Yet a little while, and then the days of thy mourning shall be over.

4. By comparing our sufferings with the sufferings of others, which exceedingly diminisheth and shrinks them up: Sometimes the Believer compares his sufferings with *Christs*, and then he is ashamed that ever he should complain and droop under them. Oh! saith he, What is this, to that which

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the Lord Jesus suffered for me? he suffered in all his *Members*, Head, Hands, Side, Feet, from all *hands*, Friends and Enemies, in all his *Offices*: Yea, in his Soul as well as Body: And indeed the sufferings of his Soul, were the very soul of his sufferings: sometimes he compares them with the sufferings of others, of the Saints in former Ages: When he reads in Faith, the History of their Persecutions, he is shamed out of his Complaints, and Faith. *Am I better then my Fathers?* Sometimes he compares them with the sufferings of the Damned: *Oh what is this to the everlasting Burnings! What is a Prison to Hell? How light and easie is it to suffer for Christ, in comparison of those sufferings which are from Christ?* And thus the Soul is quieted, and the terrour of sufferings abated.

5. Faith intitles Christ to the Believers sufferings, and puts them upon his score; and so it exceedingly transforms and alters them: Ah! it's no small relief, when a man can hold up the Bible, as that *Martyr* did at the stake, and say, *Here is that which hath brought me hither*: Or, as the *Psalmist*, *For thy sake we are killed all the day long*: Or, as the *Apostle*, Col. 1. 24. *I fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ in my flesh.*

6. Lastly, Faith engages the presence of God, to be and abide with the Soul, in all its solitudes and sufferings: It layes hold upon the Promises made to that purpose, *Psal.* 23. 2. *Isa.* 43. 2. *Heb.* 13. 5. *John* 14. 18. and whilest a poor Soul enjoys this, the very sense of Troubles is swallowed up.

And thus I have given some brief hints, how Faith relieves and strengthens the Soul in a suffering hour: The next thing is to direct you, how to improve this excellent Grace, that it may do you such service as this in a time of need: And, in order there-

hereunto, I shall give you these seven Directi-

1. Attend diligently upon the Ministration of the Gospel; which is not onely the progreant, but also the conserving cause of Faith, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. the *Doctrine of Faith*, is the Food and Nutriment of the *Grace of Faith*: There are its Rules, its Encouragements, its Cordials: Thence Faith takes and treasures up its *Michtams*, to which it hath recourse in times of need. Every *Attribute, Command*, or *Promise*, that shines forth there, is a Dish for Faith to feed on, all together are a Royal Feast, *Psal.* 63. 5. Some say the Land of *Judea* is called *the Land of the Living*, in *Psal.* 27. 13. in respect of the Ordinances of God which that people enjoyed: Certain it is, they are the great Instruments of quickning Souls at first, and preserving that life it so begat in them. But then be sure, they have Christs stamp upon them, and that they be ministred by his own Officers, and in his own way: And so you may reasonably expect more Fruits and Influences from them, than from all private gifts and helps in the World: *For the Lord loveth the Gates of* Zion, *more then all the dwellings of* Jacob, *Psal.* 87. 2. and all private helps may say, in comparison of Christs publique Ordinances, as *Gideon* said to the men of *Ephraim*, Judg. 8. 2. *What have I done in comparison of you?*

2. Improve well your *Sacrament-seasons*, those *Harvest-days* of *Faith*: This *Ordinance* hath a direct and peculiar *tendency* to the improvement and strengthning of Faith: It is a Pledge superadded to the Promise for Faiths sake: Heavenly and sublime Mysteries do therein stoop down to your Senses, that you may have the clearer apprehensions of them; and the clearer the apprehensions are, the

stronger

stronger the assent of Faith must needs be: By this Seal also the Promise comes to be more ratified to us; and the firmer the Promise appears to the Soul, the more bold and adventurous Faith is in casting it self upon it: Oh! how many poor doubting trembling Souls have in such a Season, gathered the full ripe Fruits of Assurance, from the Top-boughs of that Ordinance!

3. Frequent actings of Faith, are rare and speciall means of improving it: *To him that hath* (i. e.) that improves and uses what he hath, *shall be given*, *Mat.* 25. 29. This was the way by which *Paul* thrived in Faith, and every other Grace so exceedingly, that he out-grew them that were in Christ before him, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. It's true, that its beginning in the Soul, is not after the manner of other Habits, either *Moral* or *Natural*: This is not of *Natural acquisition*, but by *Divine Infusion*; but yet its improvement is in the same manner. Oh then! if ever you would have a flourishing Faith, rouze it up out of the dull Habit, and live in the daily exercise of it.

4. Go to Jesus Christ, who is *the Author and Finisher of Faith*, and cry to him, as *Mark* 9. 24. *Lord increase my Faith*: Yea, beg the assistance of others Prayers in this behalf, as the Apostle did, 1 *Thes.* 3. 10. 2 *Thes.* 1. 11. Faith animates Prayer, and Prayer increases Faith.

5. Improve times of affliction for the increase of Faith: For certainly, sanctified afflictions do notably exercise and increase this Grace, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. In times of Prosperity; we see not what stock of Faith we have: We live so much upon things seen, that we cannot many times tell whether we have Faith or no: But when difficult days come, then we must let out our whole subsistence and livelyhood

by

Faith, *Hab.* 2.4. Yea, then we have many Proofs and Experiments of Gods fidelity in the Promises, which is a choice help to Faith, 2 *Cor.* 1.10.

6. Keep Catalogues of all your remarkable Experiences; treasure them up as food for your Faith in time to come: Oh! it is a singular encouragement and heartning to Faith, when it can turn over the Records of Gods dealing with you in years past, and say as *Joshuah*, *Not one thing hath failed*, Joshuah 23.14. When it can say so of Promises, that have already had their accomplishments, then they will be apt to say concerning those yet to be accomplished, as *Elizabeth* said to *Mary*, *Luke* 1.45. *Blessed is the Soul that believeth, for there shall be a performance of those things which are told it by the Lord.*

These Experiments are the Food of Faith. *Psal.* 74.14. *Thou brakest the Heads of* Leviathan *in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to thy People inhabiting the Wilderness*, (*i. e.*) That famous Experience of the Power and Love of God in their Red-Sea Deliverance, where he destroyed that Sea-Monster *Pharaoh*, and his Hoast, was meat to the Faith of Gods *Israel* in the Wilderness afterwards. We often find Christ charging the Peoples unbelief on a bad Memory, *Mat.* 16.8, 9. And hence it was, that the Lord commanded the *Israelites* to keep *Journals* of every Days *Occurrences*, *Numb.* 13.1, 2. It's a thousand pities, such choice helps should be lost. Oh! if you could but remember, how the Lord hath appeared for you in former Exigencies, and how often he hath shamed you for your unbelief, it would exceedingly animate your Faith, both in present and future Distresses, *Mic.* 6.5.

7. Lastly, Beware of sense, which is the supplanter of Faith. O if you live upon things earthly, you put Faith out of its Office: things earthly have an enmity

enmity to Faith. *This is the victory by which we overcome the world, even our Faith,* 1 John 5.4. Overcoming notes a conflict, and conflicts infer oppositions. Oh you that live so much by sight and sense on things visible, what will you do when in *David's* or *Paul's* case, *Psal.* 142.4. 2 *Tim.* 4.16. when all outward encouragements and stayes shall utterly fail. What had *Abraham* done, if he had not been able to believe against hope, (*i. e.*) such an hope as is founded in sense and reason.

Reader, I advise and charge thee in the Name of the Lord; and as thou hopest to live when visible comforts die, that thou be diligent in the improvement and preparation of this excellent Grace of Faith: if it fail, thou failest with it; and as thy Faith is, so art thou. Consult all this Cloud of Witnesses, and see if thou canst find a man among them, that did not atchieve this Victory by his Faith. Had they not all been run down by the furious assaults of temptation, and instead of a *Cloud of Witnesses*, been so many *Pillars of Salt*, and Monuments of reproach and shame to Religion, if their Faith had failed in its trial.

CHAP. VII.

Wherein the necessity and usefulness of Christian fortitude, in order to sufferings, is evinced; with a brief account of its nature, and the means of attaining of it.

THe next Grace which concurs to the compleating of our actual readiness for sufferings, is *Christian Fortitude*, or holy courage; which must say in thy heart in a time of danger, as *Elijah* once did,

As the Lord lives I will shew my self. This also is a choice part of your preparation work. In this Grace our *Apostle* was eminent. When he was told, *Bonds and Afflictions waited for him*; he could say, That *none of those things moved him*, Acts 20.24. yea, when he was to appear before the Lion *Nero*, and not a man would own or stand by him, yet he stands his ground, resolving rather to die on the place, then dishonourably to recede from his principles and profession, 2 *Tim.*4.16,17. He set the world, with all its threats and terrours, lower then he set him. Oh how conspicuous was this Grace in all those *Heroes* that have past on before us! And if ever you hope to stand in the evil day, and be fetched off the Field with honour, you must rouze up and awaken your courage for God: And the necessity thereof will appear upon these four considerations:

1. Because the success and prevalence of Satans temptations in the hour of persecution depends upon the fainting and overthrow of this Grace. Wherefore doth he raise persecutions in the world, but because such terrible things are fitted to work upon the passion of carnal fear, which rises with those dangers, and makes the soul as a tumultuous Sea. This is it he aims at, *Neh.*6.13. This is a multiplying passion, that represents dangers more and greater then they are, and so drives the soul into the very net and snare laid by the Devil to take it. *Prov.*29.25. *The fear of man brings a snare*; which was sadly exemplified in *Abraham*, *Gen.*12.12. and divers others of the Saints. If he can but subdue this Grace, he will quickly bring you to capitulate for life and liberty upon the basest and most dishonourable terms; therefore the preparation of this Grace is so exceedingly necessary.

2. Be-

2. Becauſe this is the Grace that honours Jeſus Chriſt abundantly, when you are brought upon the ſtage for him.

There is a great ſolemnity at the ſuffering and trial of a Saint: Heaven, Earth, and Hell are Spectators, obſerving the iſſue, and how the Saint will acquit themſelves in that hour. *We are made a ſpectacle*, ſaith the Apoſtle. The word is Θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν, we are ſet as upon a Theatre in public view. 1 *Cor.*4.9. God, Angels, and Saints wait to ſee the glorious triumphs of their Faith and Courage, reflecting honour upon the Name and Cauſe of Chriſt. Devils and wicked men gape for an advantage by their cowardiſe. Certainly very much lies now upon the Chriſtians hands. Should he faint and give ground, how will it furniſh the triumphs of Hell, and make Chriſts enemies vaunt over him, as if his love ran ſo low in the hearts of his people, that they durſt not adventure any thing for him: or as if notwithſtanding their brave words and glorious profeſſion, they durſt not truſt their own principles when it comes to the trial! But if now they play the men, and diſcover an holy gallantry of Spirit and reſolution for Chriſt, how will it daunt the enemies, and make them ſay as *Marcus* Biſhop of *Aretheuſa* made out of *Julian*'s Nobles, preſent at his torments, to ſay concerning him, *We are aſhamed, O Emperour; the Chriſtians laugh at your cruelty!* And how will God himſelf rejoyce and glory over them, as he once did over *Job* when he fetch'd him with honour off that firſt Field! *Job* 2.3. *Still he holdeth faſt his integrity.*

3. Your own peace is wrapt up in it, as well as Gods glory. Is it nothing think you, to be freed from thoſe *Vultures* and *Harpyes*, that feed upon the hearts of men at ſuch times? Surely God reckons

that

that he promiseth a very great mercy to his people, when he promiseth it, *Prov.* 1. *ult. Psal.* 112. 7. When *Borromeus* was told of some that lay in wait to take away his life, it troubled him not; but he said, *An Deus est in mundo pro nihilo?* What, is God in the world for nought? And like to this was the answer of *Silentiarius* in a like case; *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid vivo?* If God take not care for me, how do I live? Oh this is it that brings you to an holy quietude of Spirit in times of confusion and distraction, which is a choice mercy.

4. Your magnanimity is of special use to other Saints, who are following you in the same path of sufferings. If you faint, it's like the fainting of a Standard-bearer in an Army: You bring up there-by an evil report upon the Cross of Christ, as the *first Spies* did upon the Land of *Canaan*. And a like influence with that it is like to have on your Brethren; so that there is a necessity of improving this Grace also, before you can say with *Paul* you are ready.

2. But what is this Christian fortitude, and wherein doth it it consist?

I answer briefly. It is an holy boldness in the performance of difficult duties, flowing from Faith in the call of God to it, and his promise to us in the discharge of it.

And so you have the nature of it in these four particulars:

1. It is an holy boldness, not a natural or sinful boldness, arising either from the natural constitution, or evil disposition of the mind.

2. It is expresst about duties for truth, not error, *Prov.* 9. 3. for the Interest of Christ, not of the flesh.

3. The season in which it appears is, When du-

ties are surrounded and beset with difficulties and dangers, *Dan.* 3.16. *Dan.* 6.10.

4. The Fountain whence it flowes is Faith, and that as it respects the command and call of God to duty, *Acts* 16.10. and his promise to us in the discharge thereof, *Josh.* 1.5,6.

And this Grace stands opposed both to the fear of man in the Cause of God, *Heb.* 11.27. and to Apostacy from the Truth for fear of suffering. Thus briefly of the nature of it.

3. In the last place I shall lay down some Rules for the promoting and improvement of it, and so finish this Chapter.

Now there are ten Rules heedfully to be observed for the breeding of holy courage in the breast of a Saint in evil times.

1 *Rule.* And the first Rule is this: Get a weaned heart from all earthly enjoyments. If the heart be inordinately fixed upon any one thing that you possess in the world, that inordinate estimation and affection of it will strangely effeminate, soften, and cowardize your Spirit when your trial comes, 2 *Tim.* 2.4. You meet not with a man of courage for God, but had his heart dead to earthly things; so it was with *Paul*, *Phil.* 3.8. Since the Apostles dayes we scarce meet with a greater example of holy magnanimity then *Luther*; and if you read his story, you will find few men ever set a lower rate on the world then he. All the *Turkish Empire* in his eye was but a Crumb cast to the Dogs. *Germana est haec bestia pecuniam non curat*, Money could not tempt him.

2 *Rule.* Suffer not guilt to lie upon your Consciences: It is a fountain of fears, and you can never attain boldness for God, till it be removed, *Rom.* 5.1,2,3.

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The Spirit of a sound mind is opposed to the Spirit of fear, 2 *Tim.* 1.7. Now that sound mind is a mind or spirit that is not wounded, and made sick and infirm by guilt. Oh what black Fogs and Mists arise out of Guilt, which becloud our Evidences, and fill us with fears and discouragements! *Gen.* 42. 21, 22.

Clear your Call to difficult services; be well satisfied that you are in that way and posture God expects to find you in. O what courage this will give! *Josh.* 1.9. Then a man may promise himself Gods presence and protection, 2 *Chron.* 15.2. But whilst a man is dubious here, and cannot tell whether it be his duty or not that he is engaging in; how can he have courage to hazard any thing for it? For thinks he, I may suffer much from men, and yet have no thanks of God for it, 1 *Pet.* 2.19. And further till a man be clear in this, he cannot commit his Cause to God. And it is a sad thing to be cut off from so choice a relief as that is, 1 *Pet.* 4.19. 3 *Rule.*

Get right notions and apprehensions of your enemies. We are apt to *magnifie* the Creature, as if he could do more then he *can*, and thereby *disable* our selves from doing what we *should*. Possess your souls with the belief of these five things concerning them. (1) That they are poor weak enemies, *Isa.* 40.15,17,22. but as a swarm of Gnats in the aire. See how God describes them, *Isa.* 51. 13.14. (2) That little power they have is limited by your God, who hath the bounding and ordering of it, *John* 19.11. *Psal.* 76.10. (3) They carry guilt upon them, which makes them more timerous then you, *Isa.* 8.12. Their fear is a strange fear. (4) They onely use carnal weapons against you which cannot touch your souls. If they were praying enemies that could engage God against you, 4 *Rule.*

they would be formidable Enemies indeed; but this they cannot do. The largeſt Commiſſion that any of them ever had from God, extended but to the bodies and bodily concernments of the Saints, *Luke* 12.4,5. They cannot thunder with an arm like God, nor blot your name out of the Book of Life, nor take away your part out of the New *Jeruſalem*; therefore fear not man. (5) Your Enemies are Gods Enemies; and God hath eſpouſed your Cauſe and Quarrel. The more cruel they are, the kinder he will be to you, *John* 9.34,35.

5 *Rule.* Labour to engage the preſence of God with you in all places and conditions. Whilſt you enjoy this, your ſpirits will be invincible and undaunted, *Joſh.* 1.9. *Pſal.* 118.6. A weak Creature aſſiſted and encouraged by the preſence of a great God, will be able to do and ſuffer great things. Poor Fleſh in the hand of an Almighty Spirit acts above it ſelf. A little Dog, if his Maſter be by and animates him, will ſeize upon a greater Beaſt then himſelf, though he would run from him were his Maſter abſent. Our courage ebbs and flowes, as the manifeſtations of the Divine Preſence do. Oh get thy ſelf once within the Line of that Promiſe,, *Iſa.* 43.1,2. and thou art invincible.

6. *Rule.* Get an high eſtimation of Jeſus Chriſt, and all his concernments. They that *value* him *higheſt*, will *adventure* for him *fartheſt*. Magnanimous *Luther* how ineſtimable a value did he ſet upon the Truths of Chriſt! *Ruat Cœlum*, &c. *Let Heaven ruſh, rather then a crumb of Truth ſhould periſh.* Thou wilt never be a man of zeal and courage for Chriſts intereſt, untill that intereſt of Chriſt have ſwallowed up all thine own Intereſts. No ſooner is the Soul acquainted with, and intereſted in Chriſt, but he heartily wiſhes well to all his affairs and concernments,

Pſal.

*Psal.*45.3,4. This is that which puts mettle and resolution for Christ into the soul.

Beware you be not cheated with Maximes of carnal policy, mistaken for Christian prudence. Many are so: And they prove destructive to all true zeal and courage for Christ. Never was Religion professed with greater plainness and simplicity, then by the Primitive Christians: And never was there an higher Spring-tide of courage and zeal for God, , then in those dayes. We are apt to call it prodigality, and are grown wiser to husband our lives and comforts, better then they did. But indeed our Prudentials have even swallowed up our Religion. It's true, there is such a thing as Christian prudence; but this doth not teach men to shun all costly and difficult duties, and prostitute Conscience to save the Skin. *But a man of understanding walketh uprightly*, Prov.15.21. 7 *Rule.*

Look upon the in-side of Troubles for Christ, as well as upon the outside of them. If you view them by an eye of sense, there appeareth nothing but matter of discouragement. To look on the out-side of a Prison, Banishment, or Death, is affrighting and horrible: But then if you look into the inside of these things by Faith, and see what God hath made them to his people, how joyfull and comfortable they have been in these conditions; what honey they have found in the carkass of a Lion, what songs in the Stocks and Dungeons, what glorying in tribulation, and an hundred fold reward even in their sufferings: O then that which looked like a Serpent at a distance, will appear but as a Rod in hand. How many have found themselves quite mistaken in their apprehensions of sufferings! and been more loth to come out of a Prison, then they were to go in. If you did but see your supports, 8 *Rule.*

and comforts that Souls ordinarily meet with in their troubles for Christ, you would not look on them as such formidable things.

9 *Rule.* View the issue and reward of sufferings by an eye of Faith: this also will strongly abate the horrour and dread of them, *Heb.* 10.34. Upon this account it is the Saints have so slighted and contemned them, *Rom.*8.18. 2 *Cor.*4.16,17. But then see that you act your Faith, (1) Upon the certainty of it: Look at it as a most reall and substantial thing, *Heb.*11.1. (2) View it as a great and *glorious reward*, And (3) as near at hand: And then say to thy soul, Come on, my soul, come on; Seest thou the joy set before thee! the Crowns of glory ready to be set on thy head by the hand of a righteous God. Oh what compare is there betwixt those Sufferings and that Glory!

10 *Rule.* Propound to your selves the best patterns and examples. Keep your eye upon the Cloud of Witnesses; these are of special use to beget holy courage, *Heb.*12.1. *Jam.*5.10. Who would be afraid to enter the Lists, and grapple with that Enemy that he hath seen so often foiled, and that by poor weak Christians? To this end I cannot but judge these choice Collections in thy hands singularly usefull. Oh converse frequently with these Worthies; who being dead, yet speak to thee, and have beaten the path before thee.

CHAP. VIII.

Discovering the necessity of an Heart mortified to all Earthly and Temporal Enjoyments, in order to the right managing of a suffering condition: with several Directions for the attaining thereof.

THE next thing wherein your actual readiness for Bonds or Death consisteth, is, in the *mortification of your Affections to all Earthly Interests and Enjoyments, even the best and sweetest of them:* Till this be done, in some measure, you are not fit to be used in any such service for the Lord, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. The living World, is the very Life of Temptations: The travailing pains of Death, are stronger and sharper upon none, than those that are full of Sense and Self. As you see in Nature, what Conflicts and Agonies strong and lively persons suffer when they die: When others, in whom Nature is decay'd and spent before-hand, die away without half that pain, even as a Bird in the shell. Corruption in the Saints, is like the Sap in green Wood, which resisteth the fire, and will not burn well, till it be dryed up. Prepared *Paul* had an Heart mortified in a very high degree, to all the Honour and Riches of the World, accounting them all but Trifles, *Gal.* 6. 14. 1 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

The need of this will be evinced by these five Considerations.

1. Unless the Heart be mortified to all Earthly enjoyments, they will appear great and glorious things in your eye and estimation: and if so, judge what a Task you will have, to deny and leave them

all in a suffering hour. It is Corruption *within*, that puts the Luster and Glory upon things *without*: It's the Carnal Eye onely that gazes admiringly after them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. And hence the *Lust* is put, to expresse the *Affection*, 1 *John* 2. 16. because all that inordinate affection we have to them, arises from our high estimation of them, and that estimation from our Lusts, that represent them as great and glorious: Therefore certainly, it will be difficult (if not impossible) to deny them, till they have lost their glory in your Eye; and that they will never do, till those Lusts within you, that put that Beauty and Necessity upon them, be first crucified. As for instance, What a Glory and Necessity doth the Pride of Men put upon the Honour and Credit of the World, so that they will rather choose to die, than survive it! but to a mortified Soul it's a *small matter*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 3. So for Riches, how much are they adored, till our Lusts be mortified, and then they are esteemed but *Dung and Dross*, *Phil.* 3. 8. 'Tis our Corruption that paints and gilds over these things: When these are crucified, those will be lightly esteemed.

2. Mortification of Corruptions, is that which recovers an healthful state of Soul: Sin is to the Soul, what a Disease is to the Body; and Mortification is to sin, what Physick is to a Disease. Hence those that are but little mortified, are in a comparative sense called *Carnal*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. and *Babes*, *vers.* 2. in respect of weakness. Now, suffering Work being some of the Christians hardest Labour and Exercise, he cannot be fitted for it, until his Soul be in an healthful state: A sickly man cannot carry heavy Burdens, or endure hard Labours and Exercises: The sick Souldier is left behind in his Quarters,

ers, or put into the Hospital, whilest his Fellows are dividing the spoils, and obtaining glorious Victories in the Field. To this sense some expound *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, mortifie the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.* Where, as *Death* is put to note a languishing state of Soul, whilest Mortification is neglected: So *Life* is put to express an healthful and comfortable state; *vivere pro valere*; so that upon this account also the necessity of it appears.

3. Your *Corruptions* must be mortified, else they will be raging and violent in the time of Temptation, and like a Torrent, sweep away all your Convictions and Resolutions. It's sin unmortified within, that makes the Heart like Gun-powder; so that when the Sparkles of Temptation fly about it, (and they fall thick in a suffering hour) they do but touch and take. Hence, the *Corruptions* of the *World* are said to be *through Lust*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. With these internal unmortified Lusts, the *Tempter* holds correspondence: and these be the *Traytors* that deliver up our Souls into his hands.

4. Unless you be diligent and successful in this Work, though you should suffer, yet not like Christians, you will but disgrace Religion, and the Cause for which you suffer: For it's not simple suffering, but suffering *as a Christian*, that reflects Credit on Religion, and finds acceptation with God. If you be envious, fretful, discontented, and revengeful, under your sufferings, what Honour will this bring to Christ? Is not this altogether unlike the Example of your Lord? *Isa.* 53. 7. and the behaviour of suffering Saints? 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. Yet thus it will be, if your Pride, Passion, and Revenge, be not first subdued: For what are the breakings forth of such distempers of Spirit, but as the flushes of Heat

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in the Face from an ill-affected Liver? Most certain it is, that all these Evils are in your Natures; and as certain it is, they will rise like Mud and filth from the bottome of a Lake, when some eminent Trial shall rake you to the bottome; *Natura vexata prodit seipsam.*

5. Lastly, Mortification must be studied and ply'd with diligence; else you will find many Longings and Hankerings after Earthly Enjoyments and Comforts, which will prove a snare to you: What is sin, but the *corrupt* and *vitiated appetite* of the *Creature*, to things that are Earthly and sensual, relishing more sweetness and delight in them, than in the blessed God? And what is Sanctification, but the rectifying of these *inordinate affections*, and placing them in their proper Object? A regenerate and mortified Christian tasts not half that sweetness in forbidden fruits that another doth: Set but Money before *Judas*, and see how eagerly he catches at it. ---- *What will ye give me, and I will betray him.* Set but Life, Liberty, or any such Bait before an unmortified Heart, and how impotent is he to withstand them, as offered in a Temptation. Oh these unmortified Lusts! how do they make men hanker, long, and their Lips water (as we use to say) after these things? This makes them break Prison, decline sufferings, though upon the basest tearms: Whereas a mortified Christian can see all these things set before him, yea offered to him, and refuse them, *Heb.* 10.35. It is with them much as it was with old *Barzillai*, 2 *Sam.* 19.35. when Nature is decayed, they find but little pleasure in natural actions, *Eccles.* 12.1. And look as the Body of sin decays and languishes, so do these Longings also: It weans the Soul from them all; and enables it to live very comfortably without them, *Psal.* 131.

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Phil. 4. 12. There needs no more to be said, to evince the necessity of Mortification, and discover what influence it hath into a Christians readiness to sufferings.

It remains therefore, that I open to you some of the principal *Corruptions*, about which it mostly concerns you, to bestow pains e're sufferings come. Now look as there are four principal Enjoyments, in which you are like to be tryed, *viz. Estate, Name, Liberty, Life*; so the Christians Work in suffering times, lies in mortifying these four special *Corruptions, viz.* First, The Love of the World. Secondly, Ambition. Thirdly, Inordinate affectation of freedome and pleasure. Fourthly, Excessive love of life.

1. For the love of this World, away with it, crucifie it, crucifie it: Down with this Idol, and let it be dethroned in all that intend to abide with Christ in the hour of Temptation: How else will you take the spoiling of your goods? How will you be able to part with all for Christ, as these blessed Souls did? It grieves my heart to see how many Professors of Religion are carryed captive at the Chariot Wheels of a bewitching World. Oh! good had it been for many Professors, if they had never tasted so much of the sweetness of it. *Sirs*, I beg you, for the Lords sake, down with it in your *Estimations*, down with it in your *Affections*, else Temptations will down with you e're long. I shall offer five or six Helps for the crucifying of it.

First, Consider your Espousals to Christ, and how you have chosen and professed him for your Lord and Husband: Therefore, your doting upon the World, is no less than Adultery against Christ, *James* 4. 4. If Christ be your Husband, he must be

a *Covering to your Eyes*; an unchaſte Glance upon the World wounds him.

Secondly, The more you prize it, the more you will be tormented by it: Did you prize and love it leſs, it would diſquiet and vex you leſs: It's our doating on it, that makes it draw blood at parting.

Thirdly, Get true *Scripture-notions* of the World, and rectifie your Judgments and Affections by them: If you will have the *true Picture* and *Repreſentation* of it drawn by the Hand of God himſelf, ſee 1 *John* 2.16. It's nothing elſe but *Luſt* that puts that *Luſter* upon it: It hath but a *Phantaſtick Glory*, and that alſo paſſeth away: What is become of them that ruffled it out in the World but one hundred years ago? What could the World do for them? Are they not all gone down to the ſides of the Pit? *But he that doth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Fourthly, Study and contemplate Chriſt, and the things above more: This would vail all its Glory, and kill it at the Root, *Phil.*3.18,19. Juſt as a man that hath been gazing upon the Sun, when he takes off his Eye from that bright and glorious *Creature*, and looks to the *Earth*, there is a Vail of Darkneſs overſpreading the Face of it, that he can ſee nothing. I wonder how ſuch as pretend to live above, and enjoy communion with God, can ever reliſh ſuch ſweetneſs in the World, or have their Hearts enticed and captivated by it?

Fifthly, Remember always, that by your love and delight in worldly things, you furniſh the Devil with the chiefeſt Bait he hath to catch, and deſtroy your Souls. Alas! were your Hearts but dead to theſe things, he would want an Handle to catch hold on. What hath he more to offer you, and

tempt

pt you off from Christ with, but a little Money? ome such poor Temporal Rewards: And how tle would that Soul be moved by such a Tempta- n, that looks on it all but as Dirt.

Sixthly, Lastly take notice of the approaches of *ternity*; Remember you are almost at the end of ; and when you come to lanch out into that dless Ocean, how will these things look then? It ems glorious, whilest you are in the chace and rsuit of it; but, upon a Death-bed, you will o- rtake and come up with it, and then you'l see hat a deceitful and vain thing it is: Stand by the ds of dying men, and hear how they speak of it. h the difference betwixt our apprehensions then, d now! Thus labour to wean off your Affections, d crucifie them to the World.

2. Mortifie your *Ambition*, and vain *Affectation* f the Repute and Credit of the World: Oh stand ot on so vain a thing as this! judge it but a small hing to be judged of man, to have your Names cast ut as *evil*; Let not *Scoffs* and *Reproaches* be such rrible things to you. It is, without doubt, a reat Trial; else the Holy Ghost had not added a eculiar *Epithete* to it, which is not given to any ther of the sufferings of the Saints: not cruel Tortures, nor cruel Stonings, Burnings, slayings with the Sword; but *cruel mockings*, Heb. 11.36.

Yet learn to be dead and unaffected with these hings; set the reproaching World as light, and as low as it sets you: *Despise the shame*, as your Master *Christ* did, *Heb.* 12.2. and to promote *Mortification* in this, take these Helps:

1. Consider this is no new or strange thing that hath hapned to you: The holiest of men have past through the like, if not worse Tryals, *Heb.* 10.33. *Psal.* 44.14. Reproaches have been the

the Lot of the best men. They called *Athanasius* *Sathanasius*; *Cyprianus*, *Copprianus*, a gatherer of Dung; Blessed *Paul a pestilent fellow*: Doctor *Story* threw a Faggot at sweet Mr. *Denlyes* Face, as he was singing a Psalm in the midst of the flames, saying, *I have spoiled a good old Song.*

2. It may be Religion hath been reproached and scoffed at for your sakes; and if so, think it not much to be reproached for Religions sake.

3. It's much better to be reproached by men for discharging Duty, than by your own Consciences for the neglect of it: If all be quiet within, never be moved at the noise and clamour without: If you have a good Roof over your Head, be not troubled though the Winds and storms bluster abroad, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. Take heed what you do, and then be heedless what the World sayes.

4. Always remember, that you neither stand or fall at the Worlds Judgment, and therefore have the less reason to be troubled at it, 1 *Cor.* 4. 3. If your condition were to be cast to Eternity by it, it were somewhat.

5. There is a worth and excellency in the Reproaches of Christ, as bad as they seem; and such an excellency, as is not to be matched by any Earthly Enjoyment, *Heb.* 11. 26. The Reproaches of Christ are of more worth, than the Treasures of *Egypt*, though *Egypt* then was the *Magazen* of the World for Treasures. The Apostles counted them their honours, *Acts* 5. 41.: When *Ludovicus Marsicus*, a Knight of *France*, saw those that were to suffer with him in their Chains, and that they put none upon him, because of the Nobility of his Birth, he said to the *Executioner*, *Cur me non quoq; torques donas, & illustris illius ordinis militem non creas?*

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why do you not honour me with a Chain too, and create me a Knight of that Noble Order?

6. Lastly, should Scoffs and Reproaches scar you from Christ and Duty; then, though you should escape the Reproaches of men, yet shall you fall under the everlasting Contempt of God, Angels, and good Men. Therefore, *Fear ye not the Reproaches of men that shall die, nor be afraid of their Revilings, for the Moth shall eat them up like a Garment, and the Worm shall eat them like Wool; but my Righteousness shall be for ever, and my Salvation from Generation to Generation,* Isa. 51. 7, 8.

3. Mortifie your *inordinate affectation* of liberty, pleasure, and delicate living: O let not a Prison seem so formidable to you. It's true, as Christ told *Peter*, Joh. 21. 18. *When thou wast young, thou girdest thy self, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.* You have now your liberty to go whither you will, and it's a precious mercy if well improved: The Birds of the Air (as one saith) had rather be in the Woods at liberty, though lean and hungry, than in a Golden Cage with the richest Fare. But yet if God will call you to deny this also for Christ, see that you be ready to be bound as *Paul* was, and receive the Chain and Bonds of Christ with thanksgiving: To which end, consider,

1. That the affliction, in such cases of Restraint, is more from within, than from without you: There's no place but may be delectable to you, if your heart be heavenly, and the presence of God be engaged with you. What a sweet Night had *Jacob* at *Bethel*? *Paul* and *Silas* in the Stocks? See that precious *Letter* of *Pomponius Algerius*.

Tran-

Transtulit in cælum Christi præsentia claustrum,
Quid faciet cælo? quæ cælum jam creat antro.

It's your own Unbelief and Impatiency, that gives you more trouble than the Condition.

2. No *Keeper* can keep the *Comforter* from you, if you be the *Lords Prisoners*, Act. 16. If they could bar out the *Spirit* from you, it would be a dismal place indeed: But ordinarily, there the *Saints* have their cleerest *Visions* of *God*, and sweetest *presence* of the *Spirit*: You are the Lords *Free-men*, whilest Mens *Prisoners*: All the World cannot devest you of the *state of liberty* Christ hath purchased for you, *John* 8. 36.

3. Though a *Prison* look sad and dismal, yet it is not *Hell*: Oh blesse God for that; that's a sad *Prison* indeed! *Beloved*, Men have their *Prisons*, and God hath his: Gods *Prison* is a *terrible Prison* indeed; Thousands are now there in Chains, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19. and there you deserved to have been sent long ago: If God exchange an *Hell* for a *Prison*, have you any cause to complain?

4. How obdure and cruel soever men are to you, yet the *Lord Jesus* is kind and tender-hearted to his *Prisoners*: he puts the kindnesses that any shew them upon his own account, *Mat.* 25. 36. *He looks down from Heaven to hear the sighings and groanings of his Prisoners*, Psal. 102. 20. He will tenderly sympathize with you in all your *Prison-Straights*, and *Troubles*.

5. A *Prison* hath been hansel'd and perfumed by the best and holiest of men in all Ages, 1 *Kings* 22. 27. *Jer.* 32. 2. *Mat.* 4. 12. *Acts* 5. 18. *Acts* 26. 10. God hath made it a setled *School* of *Discipline* to them.

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6. Should you, to avoid a *Prison*, commit a sin, instead of being Man's *Prisoner*, you shall be clapt up by God: for he hath a *Prison* for your Souls even in this World, *Psal.* 142.7. and this is ten thousand times more dreadful, than any *Dungeon* in the World. Oh it's a *dark Prison!* not a *Cranny* to let in one *Beam* of *Gods Countenance* upon your poor *Souls*. What a sad exchange have you made then?

7. Consider, what a ground of Comfort GOD hath laid in that Word, *Rev.* 2. 10. to obviate the fears and Terrours incident to us in such a condition: God hath limited Satan and his Instruments, both for time, number, and all circumstances of the tryal.

8. Lastly, You do not know what a Mercy may be in it: It may be a time of retirement from the World, and the Clamours and Distractions that are abroad. These days of Imprisonment may be your Holy-days; as a Prisoner of Christ once called them.

4. Get an Heart mortified to the excessive and inordinate love of life: This, I confess, is the highest and hardest point of *Self-denial*, because it wraps up all other *Self-Interests* in it. But yet consider,

First, Though Life be very dear, yet Jesus Christ is ten thousand times dearer than thy Life: If thou be a Saint, he is the Life of thy Life, and the length of thy days; and in comparison of him, and his glory, Saints should, and have despised and slighted their Lives, *Luke* 14.26. *Rev.* 12.11.

Secondly, Die you must; and if by shrinking from Christ, you should protract a miserable Life for a few days longer, in the mean time losing that *which is better than life*, Psal. 63.3. *Mat.* 10.39. Oh then you lie upon your Death-bed, you will wish;

that you had obeyed Gods Call, and so have departed in peace.

Thirdly, If you have cordially covenanted with Christ (as all sincere Believers have done) then have you yielded up your lives to him, to be disposed for his glory, *Rom.* 14.7. So that look, as Christ both lived and dyed for you; so, *to you to live is Christ:* And all the excellency you see in life, consists in that reference and subserviency it hath to his glory. I say then, if you have understandingly and cordially transacted in a Covenant-way with him, your care will not be, so much how to shun Death, as by what Death you may most glorifie God, *John* 21. 19. And certainly, you can never lay them down upon a more honourable or comfortable account than in his cause, and for his sake. It was a great trouble to *Luther*, that he carryed his bloud to his Grave.

Fourthly, To die for Christ, is one of the highest Testifications of your love to Christ, that you are capable of, *John* 13.37. Yea, 'tis such a Testification of your Love to the Lord Jesus, as Angels are not capable of making.

Fifthly, Why should you decline even a violent death for Christ, when as the bitterness of death is past, and there is no *Hell* following the *pale Horse?* It cannot separate you from Christ, *Rom.* 8.38.

Sixthly, Think what a death Christ suffered for you: in which the fulness of the Wrath both of God and Man met together, so that he was sore amazed; yet with desire, did he desire it for your sakes.

7. Lastly, Think what a life you shall have with Christ, as soon as this is deliver'd up to, and for him, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. It is but wink, and you shall see *God.*

Oh

Oh that these things might provoke you to follow on, and ply the Work of *Mortification*.

CHAP. IX.

Wherein is opened the singular advantage that suffering Saints have, by their skill, and in-sight into the Methods and Mysteries of Sathans Temptations; some of those Wiles of Satan opened; and Rules for the avoiding of the danger briefly described.

THE hazards and dangers of Christians, in times of Persecution, arise not so much from their Sufferings, as from the Temptations that always attend, and are by Satan planted upon their sufferings: for the most part, Sufferings and Temptations go together, *Heb.* 11.37. And therefore, it behoves such as are, or expect to be called to Sufferings, to dive into the Mysteries of Temptations, and be well acquainted with the Enemies Designs upon them. So was *Paul*, and so he supposes all others to be, that ingage in the same Cause; *We are not ignorant of his Devices*, 2 *Cor.* 2.11. There is a manifold advantage redounding to suffering Saints thereby.

1. He that is well acquainted with the Methods of Temptation, will be the better able to descry the first approaches and beginnings of it; and a Temptation discovered, is more then half conquered. It is a special Artifice of Satan, to shuffle in his Temptations as undiscernably as may be into the Soul; for he knows, that *in vain is the Net spread in the sight of any Bird*, Prov. 1.17. And therefore, he ordinarily makes a suffering season, to be a tempting

seaſon; becauſe as ſufferings do, like Fire to Iron make it impreſſive and operable, ſo they do ordinarily put the Soul into an hurry and diſtraction, and ſo gives him an advantage, to tempt the Soul with leſs ſuſpicion, and greater ſucceſs. But now, a skilfull Chriſtian, that is acquainted with his Wiles, will diſcern when he begins to *enter into temptation*; as Chriſts expreſſion is, *Luke* 22. 46. and ſo checque the Temptation in its firſt Riſe, when it's weakeſt and moſt eaſily broken. Doubtleſs, one Reaſon why ſo many fall by Temptation, is, becauſe it's got within them, and hath prevailed far, before it be diſcovered to be a Temptation.

2. He that is well acquainted with Satans Methods of tempting, will not onely diſcern it ſoone than another; but alſo knows his Work and Duty and how to manage the Conflict with it, which is a great matter. There are many poor Souls that labour under ſtrong Temptations, and know not what to do: They go up and down complaining, from Chriſtian to Chriſtian, whileſt the Judicious Chriſtian plyes the *Throne of Grace* with ſtrong Cries See 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. keeps up his Watch, *Luke* 22. 46 countermines the Temptation, by aſſaulting the *Corruption* by endeavours of *Mortification*, which Satan aſſaults by Temptation, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27.

3. Laſtly, To name no more; he that is beſt acquainted with the *Myſtery of Temptation*, and can maintain his ground againſt that, he ſhall be the perſevering Chriſtian under Perſecutions, and the victorious Chriſtian over them. Here lies the main Deſign of Satan, in raiſing Perſecution againſt the Saints. It is not ſo much their Bloud that he thirſteth after, as their Fall by Temptation: and all Perſecutions are deſigned by him, to introduce his

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Temptations. These work upon our Fear, and Fear drives us into his Trains and Snares, *Prov.* 29. 25. The Devils Work in raising Persecution, is but as the Fowlers work, in beating the Bush in the Night, when the Net is spread to take the Birds, which he doth affright out of their Coverts. He that understands this, is not easily moved by the strongest Opposition from his Place and Duty; and so is like to prove the most constant and invincible Christian in Times of Persecution.

Oh then how necessary is it, that since all Persecutions are intended as means to promote Temptation: and that skill and insight into these Designs of Sathan, so advantages us to frustrate his Designs in both? I say, how necessary is it, that you should be all instructed wherein the strength of Temptation lies; as also how to resist those strong and dangerous Temptations, which your Sufferings surely are intended to usher in, and make way for?

It will not be unseasonable or impertinent then in this Chapter to shew you; First, wherein the force and efficacy of Temptations lyeth: Secondly, what you are to do, when in a suffering hour such Temptations shall assault you. And first,

1 *Qu.* Wherein doth the efficacy and power of Temptation lie?

Sol. I answer, It lies principally in three things:

1. In the kind and nature of the Temptation.
2. From the Craft and Policy of Satan in managing them.
3. From that secret Correspondency, that Satan hath with our own Corruptions.

1. It lies in the kind and nature of the Temptation it self: For it's most certain, that all Temptations

tions are not alike forcible and dangerous. Some are ordinarily more successful then others, and such are these that follow.

1. Strange and unusual Temptations, I mean not such as none have been troubled with before us; for there is not a Dart in his Quiver, but hath been levelled at the Breasts of other Saints, before it was levelled at ours, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. But by strange and unusual, I mean such, as the People of GOD are but rarely troubled with, and possibly we were never exercised with before. These are the more dangerous, because they daunt and amaze the Soul, and ordinarily beget despondency, even as some strange Disease would do, that we know not what to make of.

2. Mark them for most dangerous Temptations, that are *adapted* and suited to your proper sin, or *constitution-evil*. For certainly, that is the most dangerous Nick and *Crisis* of Temptation when it tryes a man there. Now if he be not truly gracious, he falls by the Root irrecoverably, *Luke* 22. 5, 6. Or if sincere, yet without special assistance, and extraordinary vigilance, he falls scandalously, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. compared with 1 *Sam.* 16. 12.

3. When it is a *Spiritual Temptation*, which rises undiscernably out of a Christians Duties. This is the less suspected, because Temptations usually come from the strength and livelyness of *Corruptions*; but this, from the Slaughter and Conquests we make of them. Duties, and enlargements in them, which are the Poyson of other Lusts, proves the Food and Fewel of this, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7, 8. And how much the more covert and close any Temptation is, by so much the more dangerous it is.

2. The

2. The strength and efficacy of temptation lies much in the skill and policy of Satan in the management of it: And hence they are called wiles, methods, and devises, 2 *Cor.* 2.11. *Ephes.* 6.11, and himself an old Serpent, *Rev.* 12.9. And amongst the rest of his deep and desperate stratagems these following are remarkable.

1. In imploying such instruments to manage his temptations as are least suspected, and have the greatest influence. A *Teacher*, *Gal.* 2.14. a *Wife*, *Gen.* 3.6. *Job* 2.9. *Friends*, *Acts* 21.13. The Devil knows it is a bad business, and therefore must make the best of it.

2. In the orderly disposition and ranging of his temptations; beginning with little things first, and then by degrees working over to greater. His first motions are commonly most modest, *Gen.* 3.1. Should he discover the depth of his design at first, it would startle the Soul, and make it reply as *Hazael*, *Am I a Dog that I should do this?* It's far easier to gain his end by parts, then putting for all at once.

3. In endeavouring to engage the Soul upon his own ground. I mean to tempt him from his Station and Duty where God set and expects to finds him. He knows while you are with God, God is with you, 2 *Chro.* 15.2. Whilst a man abides there, he abides with God, 1 *Cor.* 7.24. Whilst he is there, the Promise is a good breast-work to keep off all his darts: And therefore as Fishers, when they have spread their Net in the River, beat the Fishes out of their coverts and caverns, so doth Satan.

4. In not presenting the temptation, till the Soul be prepared to receive it. He loves to strike when the iron is hot. He first lets their troubles come to an height, brings them to the Prison, Gib-

bet, or Fire, and then offers them deliverance, *Heb.*11.35,37. This *Mirrour* furnishes you with many instances of it.

5. In tiring out Souls with the long continuance of temptations. What he cannot win by a *suddain storm*, he hopes to gain by a *tedious siege*. Forty days together he assaulted the Captain of our salvation, *Mark* 1.13. And truly it's a wonder the Soul yields not at last, that hath been tried long, *Psal.*125.3. When the *rod of the wicked lies long upon the back of the righteous, it is much if he put not forth his hand to iniquity*

6. In falling most violently upon them, when they are lowest and most prostrate in their spririts and comforts: So he assaulted *Job* with a temptation to curse God and die, when he sate in that deplorable state upon the dunghill, *Job* 2.8,9. He loves to fall upon us as *Simeon* and *Levi* did upon the *Shechemites*, when we are sore and wounded: And therefore ordinarily you find times of *divine desertions*, to be times of *diabolical temptations*. So that look as the wild Beasts of the Desart come out of their Dens in the night, and then roar after their prey, *Psal.* 104.20. so doth Satan when the Soul seems to be benighted and lost in the darkness of Spiritual troubles.

And this is the second thing wherein the efficacy and strength of temptation lies.

3. Lastly, it lies in that secret correspondency Satan holds with our bosome enemies. Were it not for this *domestick Traitor*, he could not surprise us so easily: As you see in *Christ*, he could do nothing, because he found nothing to fasten a temptation on. He was like a *Chrystal glass* filled with pure Fountain water: So that though he should have been agitated and shaken never so much by temptation, yet no filthy sedement could appear; but now

we

have an enemy within that holds intelligence with Satan without; and this would prove a *Devil* to us, if there were no other *Devil* to tempt us, *Jam.*1.14,15. It's a Fountain of temptation in it self, *Matth.*15.19. and the chief instrument by which Satan doth all his tempting work, 2 *Pet.*1.4. Our several passions and affections are the handles of his temptations. Every thing saith *Epictetus* hath δύο λάβας, two handles to take it by. Our affections are the handles of our Souls. The temptation of Self-confidence, and Pride, takes hold of a daring and forward disposition; the temptation of Apostacy upon a timerous disposition, *&c.* These inbred lusts go over to the Enemy in the day of battle, and fight against the Soul, 1 *Pet.*2.11. This is a more dangerous Enemy, then the Devil. 'Tis true, they both work against us, but with a double difference. Satan works *externally*, and *objectively*; but Lust *internally*, and *physically* (i.e.) *qua ad materiale*, as it's capable of physicall efficiency. *Sin wrought in me all manner of concupiscency*, *Rom.*7.8. Yea 'tis a subtil Enemy that doth his business politickly. *Rom.*7.11. *Sin deceived me*; it betrayes with a kiss, strangles with a *silken halter*, *Heb.*3.13. *Ephes.*4.22. These be his Agents sitting at the *Council Table* in our own breasts, and there carrying on his designs effectually: Yea, it's a restless and perpetual Enemy, no ridding your hands of him. Satan is sometimes put to flight by resistance, *Jam.*4.7. and sometimes ceases his temptations, *Luke* 4.13. but when he ceaseth to *tempt* and *inject*, this ceaseth not to irritate and sollicite: Where we are, it will be; it's our sad lot to be tied to it, and perpetually assaulted by it, *Rom.* 7.24. We may say of it, as *Hannibal* said of *Marcellus*, That it's never quiet, whether a *Conquerour*, or conquered.

quered. Yea, it's a potent Enemy too, it hauls men away to the commission of sin, *Jam.* 1.14. It seizeth the Magazeen of the soul, and delivers up the Arms, I mean the Members to be ὅπλα ἀδικίας, weapons of unrighteousness.

Thus you see wherein the efficacy and power of temptation consists. And it mightily concerns you that are, or expect to be Sufferers for Christ, to be acquainted with these things, and know where the strength of your Enemy lies.

But how shall the suffering Saint so manage himself in a Suffering hour, as not to be captivated by temptations. This brings me upon the second thing I promised; *viz.* to prescribe some Rules for the escaping or conquering of those temptations that are incidental to a suffering state. And first:

1 *Rule.* Labour to cut off the advantages of temptations before they come. It's our inordinate love to life, estate, liberty, and ease, that gives the temptation so much strength upon us. Do not overvalue them, and you will more easily part from them, *Rev.* 12. 11. O mortifie self-love, and creature-love; let your heart be loosened and weaned from them, and then the temptation hath lost its strength.

2 *Rule.* Secure to your selves an interest in the heavenly glory. When once you clearly see your propriety in the Kingdome above, you will set the lighter and lower by all things on earth. That is a pregnant Text to this purpose, *Heb.* 10.34. It's our darkness and uncertainties about those, that make us cling so fast to these.

3 *Rule.* Settle this principle in your heart, as that which you will never depart from, that it's better for you to fall into any suffering, then into the least sin, *Heb.* 11.24,25. This all will acknowledge, but how few practice it! Oh that you would practically understand

stand and receive it! Sufferings is but a *respective*, *external*, and *temporal* evil; but sin is a universal, internal, and everlasting evill.

4 *Rule.* Believe that God hath cursed and blasted all the wayes of sin, that they shall never be a shelter to any soul that flies for refuge to them, *Mark* 8.35. *Prov.* 13.15. The way of Transgressours is an hard and difficult way. There is no security in the way of iniquity. He that runs from suffering to sin, runs from the apparent to the reall danger; from the painted to the living Lion.

5 *Rule.* Live up to this principle, that there is no policy like sincerity and godly simplicity. This will preserve and secure you, when carnall wisdome will expose and betray you, *Psal.* 25.2. *Job* 2.3. Sinfull policy never thrives with Saints.

6 *Rule.* Consider sadly what the consequents of yielding up your selves to temptation will be: The Name of God will be dreadfully reproached, 2 *Sam.* 12.14. A fatal stumbling-block is laid before the blind world, 1 *Sam.* 2.36. the hearts of many upright ones made sad, *Psal.* 25.3. The fall of a Professour is as when a Standard-bearer fainteth; and a dreadfull wound it will be to thine own Conference, 2 *Cor.* 2.7. *Matth.* 25.76. One hours sleep of security, may keep you many dayes and nights waking upon the Wrack of honour.

7 *Rule.* Never engage a temptation in your own strength, but go forth against it trembling in your selves, and relying on divine Aids and Assistances, *Ephes.* 6.10. What are you to grapple with Spirits, to enter the Lists with *Principalities and Powers*? or what is your strength that you should hope?

8 *Rule.* Let the dayes of your temptation, be dayes of strong cries and supplication. Thus did *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12.

12.8. *Psal.* 109.4. Your best posture to wrestle with Temptation, is upon your knee.

9 *Rule.* Dwell upon the consideration of those choice encouragements God hath laid up in the Word for such a time. As (1) though he give Satan leave to tempt you, yet you are still in his hand to preserve you, *Deut.* 33.3. *John* 10.28. (2) That whilst Satan is sifting and trying you on Earth, Christ is interceeding for you in Heaven, *Luke* 22. 31, 32. (3) That an eternal reward is laid up for those that overcome, *Luke* 22.28,29, *Rev.* 21.7,8. And now is this reward to be won or lost.

Lastly, Be content till God open a door out of your temptations, 1 *Cor.* 10.13. The time of the Promise will come, *Acts* 7.17. Wait for it, though it tarry, and seem to be deferred; in the end it will speak, and not lye, *Hab.* 2.3. There was a secret door in the Ark, though it could not be seen whilest the waters prevailed: And so there is in all your temptations, though at present it be not discernable by you.

And thus I have brought you one step nearer to *Paul's* blessed frame. Oh give diligence to this work.

CHAP. 10.

CHAP. X.

Sheweth that a choice part of our preparation and readiness for sufferings, consists in the improvement of our praying abilities, and keeping close with God in that heavenly and excellent duty in dayes of suffering; wherein also of the nature and means of its improvement.

PRayer is said to be amongst Duties, as Faith is amongst the Graces. Doubtless it is of special use and service at all times to a Christian; but yet in suffering dayes it is of more then ordinary use and necessity, *Heb.*4.16. *Jam.*5.13. and therefore is reckoned among those choice pieces of Armour which suffering Saints are to put on, *Ephes.*6.18. I will here briefly discover the necessity of it, and then shew you that a Christian may improve himself to an excellent degree in it; and lastly prescribe some means for such an improvement.

The necessity of it to a suffering Saint will demonstratively appear if you consider;

1. That this duty is the out-let of troubles, and the best way the poor Christian hath to ease his heart when surcharged with sorrow. Griefs are eased by Groans. Such evaporations disburthen and cool the heart, as the opening of a Vein in some cases doth. Oh the sensible ease that comes in this way! When grief in the mind, like vapours in the Air, are condensed into black Clouds, that overspread the Soul, and darken that beautifull Light that once shone there, then Prayer like the Sun dispells and scatters them, 1 *Sam.*1.18. Many a Saint by Prayer hath sucked the breast of a Promise, and then fell asleep

aſleep by Divine contentment, in the boſome of God. A time may come, when thy heart ſhall be ready to break with trouble, and not a friend to whom thou canſt open and eaſe it: and then bleſſed be God for Prayer, *Micah* 7.5,6,7. That which ſinks others is, That when troubles fill and overwhelm their hearts, they try what Reaſon, merry Company, or outward Comforts can do: but alas! this is to palliate a cure, it returns again with the more violence: but this gives ſenſible relief, *Pſal.* 102. *title*, *Pſal.* 62. 8. For firſt, this opens and gives a vent to troubles, *Jer.* 20.12. (2) It gives our troubles a diverſion, and ſo a cure, *Pſal.* 5.1. and laſt *verſ.* compared. Yea (3) by praying over them, they are not onely diverted but ſanctified, and ſo ceaſe to be diſtracting.

2. As it gives a vent to our troubles, ſo an in-let to unſpeakable comforts and conſolations. See a pregnant inſtance of this, *Act.* 16.25. For (1) hereby they obtain gracious anſwers from the Lord concerning their troubles, 2 *Cor.* 12.9. In this alſo they meet the gracious ſmiles of God which ſwallow up their troubles, *Pſal.* 85.8. And laſtly, hereby they engage the temper of God to open a ſeaſonable and effectual door out of all their troubles, *Pſal.* 34.4,6.

3. Prayer begets and maintains holy courage, and magnanimity in evill times, when all things about you tend to diſcouragement. It is your being with Jeſus that makes you bold, *Acts* 4.13. He that uſes to be before a great God, will not be afraid to look ſuch little things as men are in the face. The woman clothed with the Sun, had the Moon under her feet. And what need you have of courage in evil times, hath been already ſhewed.

4. This is a duty you may perform at any time,

or

in any condition: No Adversary can cut you off from it. It cannot be said so of many other duties. None can hinder the intercourse betwixt Heaven and your Souls. You may perform it in a Prison, *Acts* 16.25. in a banished condition, *Psal.* 61.2. and so is fitted for a suffering condition.

Lastly, you must strive to excell in this, forasmuch as no Grace within, or Service without can thrive without it. God hath ordained the whole work of Grace to grow up to perfection this way, *Jude* 19.20. He will have all mercies fetched out this way, *Ezek.* 36.37. *Jer.* 29.11,12,13. All that comes from God to you, or to you from God, must come in this Channell. Be convinced then, of the need you have to improve your selves herein, as ever you hope to stand in the evil day.

But how are these praying abilities capable of improvement in the people of God? *Quest.*

Praying abilities are either externall and common, or else internal and speciall: The external and common ability, is nothing else but that dexterity and skill men get, to express themselves to God in Prayer, which men have by nature or industry. Thus many can put their meaning into apt and decent expressions, to which the Spirit sometimes adds his common touches upon the affections. And this Hypocrites rest and glory in. Or else they are special and internal, whereby men are enabled to pour out their souls to God in a saving manner. And this may be considered either in the *Habit* or *Act*. The Habit is given by the Spirit, when the principles of Grace are first infused into the soul, *Zech.* 12.10. *Acts* 9.11. By being sanctified we are made near, and by acting those principles in Prayer we are said to draw near, *Psal.* 10.17. Now in our actual drawing near to God, the Spirit hath the chief *Sol.*

chief and principal hand: and his assistance therein is threefold.

1. He excites the heart to the duty; 'tis he that whispers to the Soul to draw nigh to God, *Psal.* 27.8.

2. He suggests the matter of our Prayers, and furnisheth us with the Materials, *Rom.* 8.26: guiding us as to the matter, not onely to what is lawful, but also to what is expedient for us.

3. He stirreth up suitable Affections in Prayer, *Rom.* 8.26. and hence those groans and tears, those gaspings and vehement anhelations. But notwithstanding all our Abilities, both habitual and actual, be from the Spirit, and not from our selves, yet are they capable of improvement by us: For though in respect of acquirement, there be a great difference betwixt natural and supernatural Habits, yet their improvement is in the same way and manner; and this improvement may be made divers wayes. For,

First, Though you have the Spirit, and can pray, yet you may learn to pray more humbly then before: Though you rise no higher as to words, yet you may learn to lay your selves lower before the Lord, as *Abraham* and *Ezra* did, *Gen.* 18. 27. *Ezra* 9. 6.

Secondly, You may learn to pray with more sincerity then formerly: Ah! there is much *Hypocrisie* and *Formality* in our *Prayers*, much of Custom, &c. Now, you may learn to pour out more *Cordial Prayers*. See *Psal.* 17.1. *Psal.* 119.10.

Thirdly, You may learn to pray with more zeal and earnestnes then before: Some Saints have excelled, and been remarkable for this, *Dan.* 9. 19. *Hos.* 12.4. *James* 5. 16.

Fourthly, With more assiduity and readiness at all

all times for it, *Ephes.* 6. 18. *Praying always*, with all Prayer. Hence Christ gives that commendation to the Church, *Cant.* 4. 11. *Thy Lips, O my Spouse, drop as the Honey Comb:* The *Honey Comb* often drops, but always hangs full of Drops ready to fall.

Fifthly, You may learn to pray with more Faith: Oh the Qualms of Unbelief, that go over our Hearts in a Duty! Faith is the Soul of Prayer, and according to the Faith God finds in them, he accepts and values them. Now in all these things, you may improve your selves abundantly.

1. By being more frequent in the Duty, *Job* 22. 21. acquaint thy self with the Almighty; in the *Hebrew* it is, *accustom thy self*: Those that have been excellent, have also been abundant in it, *Psal.* 55. 17.

2. By taking heed that you grieve not the Spirit, on whose influences and assistances, you so intirely depend: Even as much as a Ship doth upon the Gales of Wind for its motion.

3. By honouring the Spirit which enables you to pray, and that especially two ways; (1) By dependance on him; go not forth in your own strength to the Duty, trust not upon your own promptness, or preparations. (2) By returning, and with thankfulness ascribing the praise of all to him: Be humble under all Enlargements: Say, *Not I, but Grace.*

4. By searching your own Hearts, and examining your Necessities and Wants, when you draw nigh to God; this will be a Fountain of Matter, and give you a deep Resentment of the worth of Mercies pray'd for.

5. Lastly, By looking more at the exercise of Graces, and less at the discovery of Parts; by labouring for Impressions more, and pumping for

Expressions less. And thus I have briefly shewed you, how to furnish your selves with this needfull Qualification also.

CHAP. XI.

Wherein is shewed the necessity of going out of our selves, even when our habitual and actual Preparations are at the greatest height; and depending as constantly and intirely upon the Spirit, who is Lord of all gracious Influences, as if we had done nothing. Together with the means of working the Heart to such a frame.

THus you have seen your habitual and actuall readiness for Sufferings, and blessed is the Soul that gives diligence to this work. But now, least all that I have said, and you have wrought, should be in vain, I must let you know, that all this will not secure you, unless you can by Humility, Faith, and Self-denial, go out of your selves to Christ, and live upon him daily for supplies of Grace, as much as if you had none of all this Furniture and Provision for Sufferings. I confess, Grace is a very beautiful and lovely Creature, and it's hard for a man to look upon his own Graces, and not doat upon them. But yet know, that if you had all these excellent preparations that have been mentioned, yea, and all Angelical Perfections superadded, yet are you not compleat without this dependance upon Christ, *Col.* 2. 10. When ever you go forth to suffer for Christ, you should say in the Head of all your excellent Graces, Duties, and Preparations, as *Jehoshaphat* did when in the head of a puissant and mighty Army,

2 Chron. 20. 12. *O Lord, I have no might in me, but my Eyes are unto thee.* This was one thing in which *Asa* excelled, and was a special part of his readiness. See 1 *Sam.* 15. 10. What a poor Creature is, the eminentest Saint left to himself in an hour of trial; the *Hop*, the *Ivey*, and the *Woodbind*, are taught by Nature to cling about stronger Props and Supporters: What they do by Nature, we should do by Grace.

The necessity and great advantage of this, will appear upon divers Considerations.

1. The Christians own imbecility and insufficiency, even in the strength and height of all his Acquirements and Preparations; what are you, to grapple with such an Adversary? Certainly, you are no Match for him that conquered *Adam* hand to hand in his state of integrity. It is not your inherent strength that enables you to stand, but what you receive, and daily derive from Jesus Christ, *Joh.* 15. 5. *Without me*, or never so little separated from me, *ye can do nothing, all our sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. Upon this very consideration it was, that the Apostle exhorts the *Ephesians*, to *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; (*i.e.*) not to depend upon their own stock and furniture, but Divine Assistances and daily Communications; *for we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but Principalities and Powers*, Ephes. 6. 10, 12. in his own strength shall no man prevail.

2. It is the great design of God in the Gospel, to exalt his Son, and to have all glory attributed and ascribed to him, *That in all things he might have the preheminence*, Col. 1. 18. That Christ *might be all in all*, Col. 3. 11. Hence, no Saint must have a self-sufficiency, or be trusted with a stock as *Adam* was; but Christ being filled with all the fulness of God,

and made the πρῶτον δεξιον, or first Receptacle of all Grace: *For it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell*; all the Saints are therefore to go to him for Supplies, and of his fulness to receive, *John* 1.16. This fulness being a *Ministerial fulness*, like that of the Sun, or of a Fountain, intended to supply all our wants. And hence is it that Faith, a self-emptying and denying Grace, is appointed to be the Instrument of fetching our Supplies from Christ. All must be derived from him, that all the praise and glory may be ascribed to him; *Phil.* 4. 14. And this is a most wise and congruous Ordination of God; for hereby not onely are his People the better secured, but by this also the reproach that lay upon Christ is rolled away: He was reproached on Earth, as barren, empty, weak. *Can any good come out of* Nazareth? He was looked upon as a *Root springing out of a dry ground*; but by this shall his Reproach be wiped away: So that unless you will go about to cross the great design of God, in the exaltation of his Christ, you must go out of your selves, and humbly, and constantly rely upon supplies from Christ, and his grace to help in the times of need.

3. A Christian is constantly to depend upon Christ, notwithstanding all his own preparations, and inherent qualifications; because the activity even of inherent Grace depends upon him: Inherent Grace is beholden to exciting and assisting Grace for all it is enabled to do. You cannot act a Grace without his Spirit, * *John* 15. 5. It may be said of Grace in us, as it was of the Land of Canaan, Deut. 11. 10, 11, 12. *It is not as the Land of* Egypt *whence ye come out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a Garden of Herbs: But a Land of Hills and Vallies, drinking water of the Rain*

* 1 *Cor.* 15.10. 2 *Cor.* 3. 5.

Rain of Heaven, a Land which the Lord thy God careth for: his Eyes are always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even to the end of the year. As the life and fragrancy of Vegetables, depends on the Influences of Heaven, so do our Graces upon Christ. And hence, he is called, (1) a Root, *Isa.* 11.10. (2) An Head, *Col.* 1.18. (3) A Sun, *Mal.* 4.2. (4) A Fountain, *Zech.* 13.1. all which Comparisons do fully carry this Truth in them.

4. Lastly, In this life of dependance lies your security: And indeed, this is the great difference, betwixt the two *Covenants*: In the first, *Adam's* stock was in his own hands, and so his security or misery depended upon the unconstrained choice of his own mutable and self-determining Will: But now in the *New Covenant*, all are to go to Christ, to depend upon him for supplies, and so are secured against all destructive dangers; *Jude* 1. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. Should you go forth in your own strength against a Temptation, either your Grace would fail, and you fall in the Conflict: Or if you obtain any Victory over it by your own strength, yet it's a thousand to one but your Pride would conquer you, when you had conquered it: Like him that slew an *Elephant*, but was himself slain by the fall of that *Elephant* which he slew. But now, by this way, as God hath secured you against the Dangers without; so also the frame and constitution of this *New Covenant* is such, as prevents the danger arising from our own Pride too. Not, *Ego, & Deus meus*; I and my God did this; as was once said by a prophane Mouth; *But Self is abased, and the Lord lifted up in his own strength*, 1 Cor. 4. 7. And thus I have briefly evinced the necessity of this daily dependance.

But next it concerns you to know, what this dependance we speak of is; This also I shall briefly

open to you, laying down somewhat *negatively*, and somewhat positively about it.

1 *Neg.* It is not to deny the Grace wrought in us by the Spirit; this were both injustice and ingratitude: We may know our own Graces so, as to be thankfull for them, though not so as to be proud of them, 1 *Cor.* 15, 10.

2 *Neg.* It is not a lazy excuse from our duty: You do not *depend*, but rather *dishonour* Christ by so doing. You must not say, Because Christ must do all, therefore I must do nothing: but rather work out your salvation, because it's he that worketh both to will and do, *Phil.* 2, 12, 13. These are not *opposed*, but *subordinated*.

But then positively, it lies in three things.

1 *Posit.* In seeing and acknowledging the infinite sufficiency and fulness that is in Christ: To acknowledge him to be all in all; not onely by way of *Impetration* procuring all, *Heb.* 9. 12. but also by way of *Application*, bringing home to the Soul all the blessings purchased by his blood, and setling us in the possession of it, *John* 14. 3. and so from first to last to eye him as the Authour and Finisher of our Faith.

2. In seeing the necessary dependance that all our Graces have upon him. That look as you see the Stream depending on the Fountain, the Beam upon the Sun, the Branch upon the Root, the Building upon the Foundation, even so do our Graces upon Christ: On him they live, and cut off from him they die. *Our life is hid with Christ in God*, *Col.* 3. 3. When you see this, and also see that all your activity and striving is but as the hoysting up of the Sails, in order to the motion of the Ship, which can do nothing till there come a Gale: When you look upon your Grace as a Creature that must be upheld,

upheld, fed, acted, and preserved by Christ, *Col.* 2. 19. Then you are prepared for this act of dependance: As for instance; You can never depend upon Christ for the acting of that Grace of Hope, until you see Christ to be the prop and foundation of it, and that it depends upon him, as upon its *cause*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. as upon its object, *Hebr.* 6. 19. and as upon its *foundation* and ground-work, *Col.* 2. 7.

You can never depend upon Christ for your joy and comfort, untill you see what a necessary dependance this also hath upon him, *Phil.* 3. 3. and that both as to its being and acting, *John* 16. 22.

You can never depend upon him for strength in any duty, untill you see how your duties depend upon Christ, not onely for the *strength* by which they are performed, *John* 15. 4. 5. but also for *acceptation* when they are performed, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. It were easie to instance in any other Grace.

3. It lies in * looking off from your own Grace, whenever you are put upon the acting off it, (I mean in regard of any dependence upon it) and looking by an eye of Faith and acceptation to Christ, *Heb.* 12. 2. To the putting forth of which acts of dependance upon Christ, holy ejaculations in our on-sets upon duty, or those quick and vigorous lifting up of our souls to God that way are of special use, it being a duty fitted for the purpose, when there is no room for set and solemn Prayer. And thus briefly of its nature.

* Ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν, *Looking off to the Authour of our Faith.*

And to urge you to this duty, I shall offer these seaven Considerations; which oh that they might prevail upon your hearts, and make you for ever to clasp and cling about Christ more then ever you have done.

1 *Consid.* You have little reason to rely upon the strength of

of your own Graces; for you may be easily deceived in that matter, and think you have much more Grace then you have. How often are the common Gifts of the Spirit mistaken for Speciall Graces! The sixth Chapter to the *Hebrews* is able to make a man tremble in this thing.

2 *Consid.* Suppose you have much Grace, yet have you not strong Corruptions, and may you not meet with strong temptations also? He that hath less of other Graces then you, may have more humility and self-denial then you, and so may stand when you fall. Great Enlargements are often attended with great temptations of Pride, *&c.*

3 *Consid.* Whatever measures of Grace you have arrived at, yet all is not able to secure you from falling, if God withhold or withdraw his aids and influences. *Abraham* had more Faith then you, and yet he fell into a sin contrary to that very Grace wherein he so excelled others, *Gen.* 20, 2. *Job* had more patience then you: which of you could behave your selves as he did, had you been in the like circumstances as he was, *Chap.* 1, 2. He is renowned for it in Scripture, *Jam.* 5, 11. yet he fell into that sin which was contrary to this Grace also, *Chap.* 3. *Moses* had more *meekness* then you: *Now the man* Moses *was the meekest man upon the Earth.* If you be but reproved, and that justly for your faults, how Waspish are you? Yet see how this Grace failed even in him, in an eminent triall of it, *Numb.* 11. 13, 14, 15. *Adam* was much more advantaged in this respect, then you, being made upright, and no corruption inherent in him, yet he fell: The *Angels* more again, yet they fell. Oh when will you learn the vanity of self-dependance!

4 *Consid.* Nothing more provoketh the Lord to withdraw his Spirit, and let you fall, then this sin of self-con-

confidence doth, *Luke* 14. 29, 30, 31. God will teach you by sad experience your own weakness, and what frail and vain things you be, if you will learn it by no other means.

If God permit you to fall (as doubtless he will if you be self-conceited) then the more eminent you have been, or are for Grace, the more will the name of God be reproached by your fall. This will furnish the triumphs of the uncircumcised, and the lamentations of your Brethren, and make them say, *How are the mighty fallen!* What dismal consequents will attend your fall! 5 *Consid.*

Have you not sad experience of your own weakness from day to day in your lesser trials? Have you not said in some smaller conflicts, as *David* once did? *My feet were well nigh slipt.* O my thinks this should teach you to look more to God, and less to Self. *If you have run with foot-men, and they have wearied you in the Land of peace*; think sadly, *how you shall contend with Horses in the swellings of* Jordan. Do not you see that you are but Feathers in the wind of Temptation? Consult your former experiences. 6 *Consid.*

Lastly, hath Christ given you more Grace then others, then how much more hath he obliged you to honour him thereby? And is this your requital of his love? What! to take the Crown from his head, and put it upon your own? Certainly a greater injury cannot be done to Christ then this. 7 *Consid.*

Well then, by all this be perswaded to cease from your selves, yea from your religious selves; and to all other your preparations, adde this as a choice one: If you do these things, you shall never fall. And thus you see the compleat Christian in his equipage for sufferings.

CHAP. 12.

CHAP. XIII.

Containing the first use of the point by way of conviction, discovering the unreadiness of multitudes of Professors for suffering-work.

YOu have seen by all that hath been spoken, what the necessary prerequisites unto a suffering condition are, and what manner of persons you must be (both for habitual and actual readiness) if ever you honour Christ by bonds or death for him. And I doubt not but your judgements and consciences yield to the evident necessity of these things wherein I have placed the Christians readiness. But alas! where shall we find among the throngs and crowds of Professours, any considerable numbers thus qualified and prepared? To suffer for Christ, is a gift that few have received. We are fallen into the dregs of time. Oh how little of the Primitive zeal and simplicity remains among the Professours of this Age! Later times have produced a sort of Professours of another stamp and Spirit. These have the *light*, but they had the *love*; these *see* more, but they *did* and *suffered* more. How many that are an ornament to Religion, do adorn themselves with the name of it!

Now according to this account given of a ready Christian, divers professing persons will be convicted of their unreadiness and inability to manage suffering work; As first,

1. The politick and hypocritical Professours, whose hearts were never *set right* at first, and therefore cannot be *stedfast* when trials come, *Psal.* 78. 8. Their hearts were never *sound in Gods statutes*, and therefore no wonder if they be not onely a *shame*

Never

without *ashamed* of their profession, *Psal.* 119.80. Never wonder if you see that profession which began in *hypocrisie*, to end in *apostacy*. These want their habitual readiness for sufferings, and so cannot drink of that cup: needs must they fall when tried; and when they fall, they fall dreadfully, and often irrecoverably, for they neither have the *seed of God in them*, nor any *promise* of God made to them. And are there not many such to be found in every place? For (1) how difficult is it to perswade many of you to any duty that hath loss or hazard attending on it. Doth not the sincere heart stand inclinable and disposed to all the known will of God? *Psal.* 119.6. Do Christians use to enquire more what is cheap, easie, and safe for them, or what is their duty? *Gal.* 1.16. Speak Conscience, for to thee I do appeal; Art thou not conscious of some reserves, limitations, and exceptions? Doth not the man like *Naaman* desire the Lord to excuse and pardon him in this or that thing? 2 *Kings* 5.17. And thinkest thou that this is consistent with sincere obedience which excepts no duty, nor quarrels with any command, because they all flow equally from the soveraignty of God? *Jam.* 2.11. and so doth what it doth *intuitu voluntatis*, upon the sight of Gods will. Say Conscience, Are there not great struglings, disputes, and contests betwixt thee, and fleshly interests in such cases? and art thou not frequently over-born? Oh search your hearts in this particular.

Yea secondly, I appeal to you, whether there be not many among you that choose sin rather then affliction? This is alwayes the Hypocrites opinion and choice. He judges sufferings the greatest evils, and so orders himself in his election. It was meerly to avoid persecution that those Hypocrites, *Gal.* 6.12.

6.12. constrained others to be circumcised, onely to gratifie the *Jews*; that so by a sinfull compliance with them the offence of the Cross might cease. If *Paul* would have done so, he might have avoided it too, but he durst not whatever he suffered, *Gal.* 5.11. Oh this is a shrewd sign of a false heart, *Job* 36.21. and the contrary disposition is always found in the upright heart, *Heb.* 11.25.

Nay, are there not some that have, and others that are ready to throw up their Profession, when they see into what difficulties it involves them? Whilest they could live upon the profession of Truth, they entertained it; but when Truth comes to live upon them, they thrust it out, and cry, Away with this Profession, it will beggar and undo us: They then repent of their forwardness, and secretly wish they had never engaged in it. O examine whether your hearts be not thus turned back, and your steps declined. If so, it's manifest you are hypocritical Professours, and that it was some outward self-respect that first engaged you in your Profession, but can never enable you to hold out when difficult dayes come. I say it's manifest by this departure from your Profession, that some outward self-respect at first allured you to it. As now when I behold the artificial motions of the Wheels in a *Watch*, and see how regularly the Needle marks the journal hours of the Sun upon the flat of the *Quadrant*, and see nothing that moves or guides it, it would cause admiration if I had never seen it before, or did not understand the cause of that motion: but when I look upon the other side, and there find Wheels, Ressorts, and Counterpoises, and a Spring that causes all those motions, I cease to wonder; certainly some Lust or other was the spring of all thy religious motions; stop or take

off

of that, and motion ceases: And if it be so, this *Scab* of Hypocrisie will at last break out into the *Botch* of Apostacy. Thou canst never hold out long under Trials, *Matth.* 13.21. Oh how many such sad sights may we live to see as Trials come! Difficult times are coming on, 2 *Tim.* 3.1. and woe to such then as want sincerity at the bottome of their Profession.

2. And as these have no habitual readiness for sufferings, and consequently must be ruin'd by them; so there are others that may be truly godly, and have the root of the matter in them, who are yet far from an actual readiness, and so continuing, are like to be a reproach to Religion when their Trial comes. For it is not a little Grace in the sleepy habit that will secure you from falling scandalously by the hand of temptation: And although that Seed of God which is in you, will recover you again, and prevent total and final Apostacy, yet oh consider what a sad thing it is to enter into, and be conquered by temptation: to be led away in triumph by the Tempter, and made a reproach to Christ. O it's a sad consideration to think how many there be amongst the people of God, that discover little or no actual preparation for sufferings, As first;

1. Upon how many of the Saints is the Spirit of slumber poured out: Even the wise as well as foolish seem now to be asleep. There is a twofold spiritual sleep; the first is *total*, upon wicked men: and it's one of Gods sorest and dreadfullest strokes upon their soul, * *Isa.* 29.10. The Hebrew word there is the same with that which is used of *Adam*, when God cast him into a deep sleep, whilst he took out his rib. And in 2 *Tim.* 2.26. it signifies such a sleep as that which is occasioned by drunkenness; out of such

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Ἀνανήψωσιν.

such a sleep doth the Lord awaken all that are saved, and they never fall into it any more. The other is *partial*, *Cant.*5.2. and is incident to the people of God, *Matth.*25.5. This is nothing else but that torpor and sluggishness of spirit which seizeth upon the Saints, and never did it prevail, I fear among them, more then now. For where is their activity for God? Where is he that *stirreth up* himself to take hold of God? *Isa.*64.7. Where is there such a generation as that, *Psal.*24.6. we pray, confer, and hear for the most part, but as men speak betwixt sleeping and waking. Where can you find, except here and there one, that hath a quick and lively sense of Gods indignation upon him, or that trembles at his judgements? Is not that the very case of the most which God describes? *Isa.*42.*ult.*

2. How many are seized by a private and worldly spirit, every man turning to his own house, and eagerly pursuing the world? *Hag.*1.9. *Jer.*45.4,5. Oh! how are we intangled in the Wilderness? how doth the World eat up our time, and eat out our Zeal, cowardize and soften our spirits, and render us utterly unfit for the Yoak and Burden of Christ? You that see so much Beauty, and taste so much sweetness in the Creature, will have an hard Tugg when call'd to deny it: You are not yet prepared to drink of the Cup, or take up the Cross of Christ.

3. How many poor Christians are of a low and timerous spirit, ready to tremble at the shaking of a Leaf: Ah poor hearts! how unfit are you for Bonds or Death? This passion of fear that so predominates in you, is the very passion that Satan assaults, and layes siege to in the hour of Temptation, as was before noted: and commonly it's occasioned (where it flowes not from the *Natural Constitution*) from an excessive love to the world, or from some guilt

guilt upon the ſpirit. It's true, the Lord can ſo aſſiſt weak Faith, and ſo ſubdue ſtrong Fears, as that you may be enabled to ſtand the ſhock when it comes: (for, as I noted formerly, our ſtrength lies not in any thing inherent in us, but we are ſtrong or weak, according to the divine preſence and aſſiſtances that we enjoy) but yet if you labour not to mortifie this Evil, and ſtir not up your ſelves in the uſe of all appointed means, to rouze your Zeal and Courage for God, I know no Warrant you have to expect ſuch aſſiſtances.

Laſtly, how many poor Chriſtians among us, are to this day dark and cloudy in their Evidences for Heaven? Had they walked cloſely with God, been laborious in the diſquiſition and ſearch of their own hearts, they had long ſince obtained a clearneſs and ſatisfaction about the ſtate of their own hearts: But as the caſe ſtands with them, how unfit are they for Bonds or Death. Oh! 'tis a ſad caſe, when inward and outward Troubles meer together, as you may ſee, *Gen.* 42. 21, 22. when there ſhall be *fightings without*, and *fears within*: When ſuch a pang as that, *Lam.* 3. 17, 18. ſhall come over thy heart, what wilt thou do?

By all that hath been ſaid, it appears, that the moſt of Profeſſours are in a very unready poſture for ſufferings: So that as Troubles come to an height, we are like to ſee many ſad Spectacles: Many Offences will come; Religion is like to be wounded in the houſe of it's friends. Oh! What a day of Mercy have we enjoyed? What helps and choice advantages, above any precedent Age, and yet unready? How ſad and inexcuſable is this?

CHAP. 13.

CHAP. XIII.

Containing another use of the Point, by way of Exhortation, perswading all the People of God, whilest the Lord respites, and graciously delayes their trials, to answer the end of God therein, and prepare themselves for greater trials; where several Motives are propounded, to excite to the Duty.

UP then from your Beds of sloth, awake from your security, O ye Saints; get upon your Watch-Towers, tremble in your selves, that ye may rest in the Day of Evil, *Hab.* 2. 1, 3, 16. Put on the whole Armour of God, *that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and when you have done all to stand*, Eph. 6. O let it never be said of your Dwellings, as it is of the Tabernacles of the wicked. *Job* 21. 9. *Their Houses are safe from fear.*

Augustus hearing of one that was deeply in debt, who yet slept heartily; sent for his Pillow, supposing there was some strange vertue in that Pillow. I wonder what Pillow you have gotten, O ye drowsie Saints, that you can sleep so quietly upon it, now that all things about you are conspiring trouble, and threatning danger. Can you sleep like *Jonah*, when Seas of wrath are tumbling and roaring round about you, and threatning to entomb you, and all your enjoyments? Behold, *The Stork in the Heavens knows her appointed time*, Jer. 8. 7. and hath not God made you *wiser then the Fowls of the Air*, *Job* 35. 11. It may be the sound of some present Judgement may a little startle you, like a sudden clap of Thunder in the Aire; but how soon doth Sloth and Security prevail and overcome you again?

They

They say Poyson by being habituated, may be made innocent: We are so used to, or rather hardned under calamities, that nothing moves or effectually awakens us. Lord! What will the end of these things be? Wilt thou surprise thy people at unawares? Shall thy judgements find them *secure*, and leave them *desperate*? O that God would perswade you *to gather your selves together, yea to gather together*, (not in an unlawful and seditious way) but in the way of duty, *before the decree bring forth, and the day pass as the chaffe*, Zeph. 2. 1, 2. O prepare to meet your God, *Amos* 4. 12. Prepare your *faith, love, courage, &c.* before God call you to the exercise of them.

And to excite you to this duty, besides all the fore-mentioned benefits of a prepared Spirit, consider these following particulars by way of motive.

The many calls which God hath given you to this work. The Lord hath uttered his voice, and called from Heaven unto you; will you be deaf to his calls? He hath called upon you (1) by the Word: God would have it cry to you first, because he would give the first honour to his Word. He hath given all his Prophets *one mouth*, *Luke* 1. 70. and they have warned you faithfully. (2) By the *Rod*: This also hath a loud voice, *Micah* 6. 9. *Psal.* 2. 5. Men of understanding will hear this voice; and those that will not hear it, shall be lashed by it even till they are sick with smiting, *vers.* 13. (3) By prodigious and portentous signs in the Heavens and Earth, such as no Age can parallel, these have a loud voice to all that regard the works of the Lord, or the operations of his hands. *Eusebius* calls

1 *Motive.*

τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ κηρύγματα, Euseb. Hist. lib. 3. cap. 8.

them *Gods Sermons to the World.* Oh that we were wise to consider what Gods ends are in these things! One observes, *That as they are the plainest and most obvious to sense, so they are commonly the last Sermons which God intends to preach to Nations, before he inflicts his punishments on them, if they repent not.* O let not God, speaking in ordinary and extraordinary wayes to you, still speak in vain.

2 *Motive.* Your preparation for sufferings, is the most probable means of preventing your fall and ruine by those sufferings. Sufferings prove fatal and destructive to some; but it is to Secure and Careless ones. Such as are diligent and faithful in the use of Gods means, are secured from the danger. Christ layes our constancy and perseverance very much upon our fore-calling the worst that may fall out, *Luke* 14.28. *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand, Ephes.*6. He that hath first severed Christ in his thoughts from all worldly advantages, and put the case thus to his own soul, O my soul, canst thou embrace or love a naked Christ? Canst be content to be impoverished, imprisoned, and suffer the loss of all for him? He is most likely to cleave faithfully to him, when the case is really presented to him indeed. And can it seem a light thing in your eyes, to be enabled to stand in such an evil day? If you fall away from Christ, then all that you have wrought is lost, *Ezek.*33. 13. *Gideons* one *Bastard* destroyed all his seventy Sons. This act renders all former actions and professions vain. If you fall, you shall thereby be brought into a more perfect bondage to the Devil then ever, *Matth.*12.23. Yea, ordinarily

Apo-

Apostates are judicially given up to be Persecutors, *Hos.*5.12. 1 *Tim.*1.20. and are seldome or never recovered again by Grace, *Hyb.* 6. 4, 6. They that lick up their vomit, seldome cast it up any more. It is a fall, within a little as low as the unpardonable sin, whence never any rise again. In some cases the *Judge* will not allow the *Offender* his Book. And is it not then a choice and desirable mercy to escape and prevent such a fall as this is? O good Souls, ply your preparation-work close then,

3. This will best answer the Grace of God, in affording you such choice helps and advantages as you have enjoyed. How long have you enjoyed the free liberty of the Gospel, shining in its luster among you? This Sun which to some other Nations hath not risen, and to divers on whom it hath shined, yet it is but as a Winters Sun, remote, and its Beams but feeble: But you have lived as it were under the *Line*, It hath been over your heads, and shed its richest influences upon you. Yea, Gods Ministers, who are not onely appointed to be *Watchmen*, *Ezek.*3.17. but *Trumpeters* to discover danger, *Numb.*10.8. these have faithfully warned you of a day of trouble, and given you their best assistance to make you ready for it. And is not their joy, yea life bound up in your stability in such a day of Tryal? Doth not every one of them call upon you in the words of the Apostle, *Phil.* 4. 1. *Therefore my Brethren, dearly Beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved.* Will it not cut them to the very heart, if after all their spending labours among you, they still leave you unready?

Enemies ſtill to the Croſs of Chriſt, impoſſible to be reconciled and perſwaded to ſuffering-work for Chriſt.

I remember I have read of the *Athenian Codrus*, who being informed by the *Oracle*, that the people whoſe King ſhould be ſlain in battail, ſhould be Conquerours: He thereupon diſrobed himſelf, and in a diſguiſe went into the Enemies Quarters, that he might ſteal a death to make his people victorious.

Oh! how glad would your Miniſters be, if you might conquer, and overcome in the day of temptation, whatever become of their lives and liberties! *Yea, and if they be offered up upon the ſacrifice and ſervice of your Faith, they can rejoyce and joy with you all.* Such is their zeal and longing after your ſecurity and welfare. But if ſtill you remain an unready people, and do become a prey to temptation, Oh how inexcuſable will you be!

4. Remember how ready the Lord Jeſus was to ſuffer the hardeſt and vileſt things for you. He had a bitter cup put into his hands to drink for you, into which the wrath both of God and man was ſqueezed out. Never had man ſuch ſufferings to undergo as Chriſts. Whether you conſider (1) the dignity of his perſon, who was in the *form of God*, and might have ſtood upon his *peerage* and equality with him; he is the *ſparkling Diamond of Heaven*, *Acts* 7. 56. The *Darling* of the Fathers Soul, *Iſa.*42.1. *glorious* as the onely begotten of the Father, *John* 1.14. yea glory it ſelf, *James* 2.1. yea, the very *brightneſs of glory*, *Heb.*1.3. He is the *deliciæ Chriſtiani orbis*, *fairer then the Sons of men*: And for him to

Dolor Chriſti fuit major omnibus doloribus. *Aquin.*

to be ſo debaſed, below ſo many thouſands of his own Creatures; become a worm, and no man; this was a wonderful humiliation. It was *Jeremiah's* lamentation, that ſuch as were brought up in Scarlet, embraced Dunghills; that Princes were hanged up by the hands, and the faces of Elders were not reverenced. But what was that to the humiliation of the Lord of glory? Or (2) that he ſuffered in the prime and flower of his years; when full of life and ſenſe, and more capable of exquiſite ſenſe of pain then others: For he was *optimæ complexionatus*, of a ſingular conſtitution: and all the while he hanged on the Tree, his ſenſe of pain not at all blunted or decayed, *Mark* 15.37,39. *Aquinas.* Or (3) the manner of his death. It was the death of the Croſs; which was as a *Rack* to Chriſt: for in reference to the diſtention of his members upon the Croſs, is that ſpoken, *Pſal.* 22.17. *I may tell all my bones.* Or (4) That all this while God hid his face from him. When *Stephen* ſuffered, he ſaw the Heavens opened. The *Martyrs* you ſee here, were many of them raviſhed and tranſported with extaſies of joy in their ſufferings; but Chriſt in the dark. He ſuffered in his Soul as well as in his Body; and the ſufferings of his Soul, were the very Soul of his ſufferings. It was the Fathers wrath that lay ſo heavy on him, as to put him into ſuch an agony, that an inſtance was never given of the like in nature: For he ſweat θρόμβοι great drops or clodders of blood, which fell from his Body to the ground, *Luke* 22.44. *It amazed him, and made him very heavy.* See *Mark* 14.33. yea, *ſorrowful even to death, Matth.* 26.38.

And yet as bitter as the Cup was, he freely and willingly drank it up; *John* 18.11. prepared himself to be offered up a sacrifice, *Psal.* 40. 6.7. *gave his back to the Smiters*, Isa. 50.6. yea longed exceedingly for the time till it came, *Luke* 12.50.

Now, if Christ so cheerfully prepared and addrest himself to such sufferings as these for you, should you not prepare your selves to encounter any difficulty or hardship for him? O my Brethren, Doth not this seem a just and fair inference to you, from the sufferings of Christ for you? 1 *Pet.* 4.1. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind.*

Oh trifle no longer; feed not your selves with fancies and groundless presumptions of immunity and peace, but foresee difficulties, and fit your selves to bear them.

CHAP. 14.

CHAP. XIV.

Containing the last use of the point, by way of support, and comfort to poor trembling souls, who do take pains to make themselves ready for sufferings; but yet finding such strength in Satans temptations, and their own corruptions, fear that all their labour is in vain, and that they shall faint, and utterly Apostatize, when theis Troubles and Tryals come to an height.

IN the last place, If it be such a blessed thing to be ready for Bonds, or Death for Christ, this may minister much comfort to such souls, who though they cannot say as *Paul* here did, that they are ready; yet are at work daily upon their own hearts to make them ready, and strive in the use of all means to *conquer* those corruptions that hinder it, and improve those Graces, in which it mainly consisteth. O poor soul, what ever present unreadiness or indisposition thou findest, and complainest of in thine own heart, yet thy condition is safe.

Oh but I cannot be satisfied in that. I fear I shall be over-borne by Temptations, when they come to an height. I have such experience of the Deceits and Treacherousness of my own heart, that it seems impossible to me to do as these blessed souls did, when I come to the like Tryals. *Ob.*

Its well thou suspectest thine own heart, and tremblest in thy self; this fear will keep thee waking, when others are securely sleeping. It *Sol.*

Mr *A.H.* was a good saying of a Reverend Minister, now with God, *He that fears to flinch, shall never flinch for fear.* It's true, seeming grace may be totally lost, *Luke* 8. 18. *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. It's granted also, that the sins of Believers deserve that God should forsake them, and that he may suffer grace in them to be sadly re-bated, and they may fall before a Temptation, as *Peter*, and all the Disciples did. But that thou shalt never be separated from Christ, or fall *Totus, a toto, in totum*, utterly away from God, thou mayest be abundantly satisfied upon these 5 or 6 Grounds.

1. From Gods eternal Electing love, wherewith all gracious souls are beloved and embraced, be their graces never so weak, or their corruptions never so strong. This is immutable, *Heb.* 6. 18. and hence its said, *Mark* 13. 22. *They shall deceive (if it were possible) the very Elect.* Now this immutable purpose of God, is not founded upon any mutable ground or Reason in thee, *Rom.* 9. 11. Yea, when he * Elected thee, he saw what thou wouldst be, and yet that hindred him not.

* *Rom.* 8. 29.

2. From the Covenant of Grace, in the Bosome of which thou art wrapped up: This is all thy salvation, and all thy hope; it will afford thee abundant satisfaction, if thou do but weigh particularly these three things about it: 1. That the *Author* of this Covenant is not a *fickle* creature, but a *faithful* God; with whom there is not *yea* and *nay*: With whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning; whose gifts and callings are without repentance; so that once within the clasp of this blessed Covenant, and in

in it for ever. 2. That God hath eſtabliſhed the Covenant with you in the blood of Chriſt; therefore the *Sacramental Cup*, is called the *Cup of the New Teſtament in his blood*, *Luke* 22. 20. the everlaſting merit and efficacy whereof, gives the ſoul of a Believer the higheſt ſatisfaction imaginable. Laſtly, add to this, That in this Covenant God hath undertaken for us, as well as for himſelf: So that what is a *Condition* in one Scripture, is the matter of a *Promiſe* in another Scripture, *Jer.* 32. 40.

3. From that ſtrict and intimate union that is betwixt Chriſt and thee. And hence its impoſſible thou ſhouldeſt be loſt; For 1. Thy union with his Perſon, drawes intereſt in his Properties with it: What ever he is, or hath, it is for thee; for, his eye of Knowledge, arm of Power, bowels of Pity, its all for thee.

2. This union with his Perſon, ſecures thy feeble Graces from periſhing, *Iohn* 4. 14. Thy Graces have an everlaſting Spring. Whileſt there is Sap in this Root, it will aſcend into the Branches.

3. It implies thy Perſeverance, becauſe by this union thou becomeſt an integral part of Chriſts Body, which would be mutilate and defective, ſhouldſt thou be *cut* off and loſt.

4. From the prevalent interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt in the Heavens, for all his Saints, in all their tryals here on Earth: From hence the Apoſtle inferres the certainty of our Perſeverance, *Rom.* 8, 34. and a pregnant inſtance of it you have in *Peters* caſe, *Luke* 22. 32. So *Heb.* 7. 25. ſpeaks fully to the caſe. To ſtrengthen this, conſider 1. Who it is that intercedes: Its

Chriſt.

Christ, whose Person is most dear and ingratiated with the Father, *John* 11. 42. 2. What he intercedes for: Surely for nothing but what is most suitable to his Fathers will. The will of Christ, and his Fathers, do not clash, *John* 16. 26, 27. Yea, what he prayes for, he prayes not for *gratis*, or asks upon any dishonourable termes to the justice of his Father; but they are all mercies purchased and paid for; and therefore fear not the failing of your Graces.

5. From the Spirit of Christ which dwelleth and abideth in thee, and hath begun his saving work upon thee. I say *saving*, for else it would afford no argument: His common works on Hypocrites come to nothing, but in thee they cannot fail: For 1. His Honour is pawned and engaged to perfect it. That reproach of the foolish Builder, shall never lye upon him, that he began to build, but could not finish. Besides, this would irritate, and void all that the Father and the Son have done for thee; both their works are compleat and perfect in their kindes, and the Spirit is the last efficient in order of working. 2. Besides, the grace he hath already wrought in thee, may give thee yet further and fuller assurance of its preservation; inasmuch as it hath the nature of a *Seal*, *Pledge*, and *Earnest* of the whole, *Rom.* 8. 23. 2 *Cor.* 1. 22. So that it cannot fail.

6. From those multitudes of *Assertory*, *Promissory*, and *Comparative* Scriptures; the rich veins whereof, run through the book of God, as so many streams, to refresh thy soul. Of *Assertory* Scriptures, see *John* 6. 39. *John* 10. 28. 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. Of *Promissory* Scriptures, see *Isa.* 54.

54. 10. *Jer.* 34. 40. 1 *Cor.* 1. 8. &c. Of *Comparative* Scriptures, see *Psal.* 1. 3. *Psal.* 125. 1. *John* 4. 14. &c. The principal scope of all which, is to shew the indefectible nature of true grace in the Saints.

And now, how should this refresh thy drooping soul, make thee gird up the loyns of thy mind! since thou dost *not run as one uncertain*, neither *fightest as one that beats the Air*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 26. but art so secured from total Apostacy, as thou seest thou art by all these things. O bless ye the Lord.

Ob. 2. But the Lord seems to be departed from my soul; God is afarr off from me, and troubles are near. I seem to be in such a case as *Saul* was, when the *Philistines* made war upon him, and God was *departed* from him; and therefore I shall fall.

Sol. Not so; for there are two sorts of Divine desertions: The one is *absolute*, when the Lord utterly forsakes his creature, so that they shall never behold his face more: The other is *limitted* and *respective*, and so he forsook his own Son, and often doth his own Elect: And of this kind, some are onely *Cautional*, to prevent sin; some are meerly *Probational*, to try grace; and others *Castigatory*, to chastize our negligence and carelesness. Now though I have not a word of comfort to speak in the case of total and absolute Desertions; yet of the latter, which doubtless is thy case, much may be said by way of support, be it of which of the three sorts it will, or in what degree it will. For 1. This hath been the case of many precious souls, *Psal.* 22. 1, 2. *Psal.* 77. 2. *Psal.* 88. 9. *Job.* 13. 24, 25, 26.

This

This was poor Mr *Glovers* caſe, as you will finde in his Story, and it continued till he came within ſight of the Stake: therefore no new, or ſtrange thing hath happened to you.

2. The Lord by this will advantage thee for perſeverance, not onely as they are cautional againſt ſin, but as they make thee hold Chriſt the faſter, and prize his * Preſence at an higher rate, when he ſhall pleaſe graciouſly to manifeſt himſelf to thee again.

* *Cant.* 3. 4.

3. This ſhall not abide for ever; its but a little Cloud, and will blow over. It is but for a *moment*, and that moments Darkneſs, uſhers in everlaſting Light, *Iſa.* 54. 7.

Yea laſtly, The light of Gods countenance ſhall not onely be reſtored *Certainly*, but it ſhall be reſtored *Seaſonably*; when thy Darkneſs is *greateſt*, thy Troubles at the *higheſt*, and thy Hopes *loweſt*. He is a God of judgement, and knows how to time his own mercies, *Pſal.* 138. 3.

Ob. 3. But I am a weak woman, or a young Perſon, how ſhall I be able to confeſs Chriſt before *Rulers*, and look great ones in the face?

Sol. Chriſt delights to make his Power known in ſuch, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. for he affects not Social glory.

2. *Thou ſhalt be holden up, for God is able to make thee ſtand, Rom.* 14. 4. Thou that art ſenſible of thine own infirmity, mayeſt run to that Promiſe.

3. Such poor weak creatures ſhall endure, when ſtronger (if Self-confident) fall, *Iſa.* 40. 30, 31. *Even the youths ſhall faint, and be wea-*

weary; and the young men utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord, ſhall renew their ſtrength. They ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles, run and not be weary, walk, and not faint.

Youths and young men are bold, daring and confident perſons, that truſt to their own ſtrength; to whom ſuch as wait upon the Lord, ſtand here oppoſed. They ſhall faint, but theſe ſhall renew their ſtrength.

Art thou then one that waiteſt and dependeſt upon an All-ſufficient God, in the ſenſe of thine own weakneſs? This Promiſe then is for thee.

4. You may furniſh your ſelves at pleaſure, with Examples of the mighty Power of God reſting upon ſuch as you are.

Thomas Drowry the poor blind Boy, whoſe ſtory you have *Part*, 1. *Page* 77. What a preſence of ſpirit was with him, when examined by the *Chancellor*!

Eulalia a Virgin, of about twelve years of age, ſee how ſhe was acted above thoſe years, yea, above the power of nature! *Part* 1. *Page* 81. Tender Women, yea Children, are above themſelves, when aſſiſted by a ſtrong God.

And thus you have the uſe of all theſe Examples, and ſome help offered you by a weak hand, in your preſent and moſt important work.

The Lord carry home all with Power upon your hearts, that (if God call you to ſuffer for him) you may ſay as *Paul* did, *I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which God the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me onely, but to them also which love his Appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 6.

FINIS.